

FAMOUS MONSTERS® OF FILMLAND

#281



FM EXCLUSIVES:

SCOTT SNYDER, BRAY WYATT, ERIC RED,
WESLEY CHU, SHARKNADO 3, & MORE!

**CTHULHU & GODZILLA
THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE!
THE BRIDE TURNS 80!**

NEW MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SHIRTS!



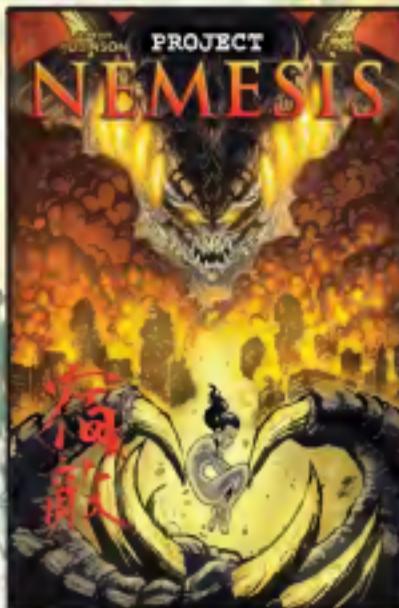
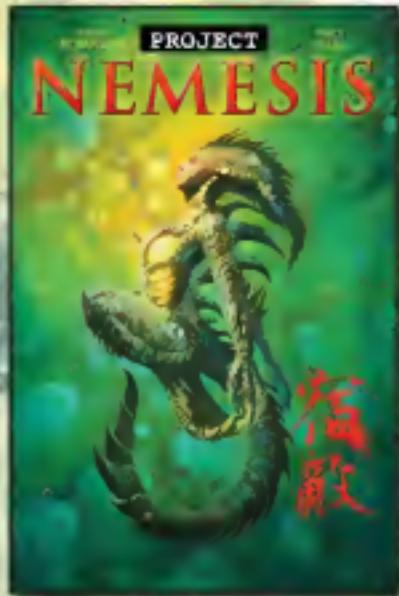
AVAILABLE NOW AT CAPTAINCO.COM

American Gothic Press

PROJECT

NEMESIS

OCTOBER 2015



WRITTEN BY: JEREMY ROBINSON

ART BY: MATT FRANK

VARIANT COVER BY: BOB EGGLETON

STAY UP TO DATE! FOLLOW US ON:

/AGPMONSTERS

@AGPMONSTERS



@AGPMONSTERS

WWW.AMERICANGOTHICPRESS.COM

WWW.FAMOUSMONSTERS.COM

AVAILABLE FOR PRE-ORDER AT YOUR LOCAL COMIC SHOP

TO FIND YOUR NEAREST SHOP CALL 888-266-4226

SPEAKING OF MONSTERS®



*"It's a perfect night for mystery and horror.
The air itself is filled with monsters."*

— Mary Shelley from *'The Bride of Frankenstein'*

TABLE OF KONGTENTS

NUMBER 281

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2015

6 FM'S STAFF PICKS Get a peek at what we're enjoying around the FM offices.

8 THE WEIRD WONDERFUL MOVIE SUMMER OF '85 Revisit one of cinema's greatest summers.

13 BRAY WYATT We chat with one of WWE's biggest stars about monsters and madmen.

18 WYTCH HUNTING Comic superstar Scott Snyder puts his spin on these classic creatures.

BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN

24 WHAT 'BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN' CAN TEACH TODAY'S FILMMAKERS After all these years there is much to take from this classic.

29 THE AIR ITSELF IS FILLED WITH MONSTERS A look at the real and fictional Mary Shelley.

32 TAINTED LOVE Monsters in love and the mischief they cause.

34 TIME ENOUGH AT LAST Sci-Fi author Wesley Chu re-invents time travel.

36 GREAT WHITE HOUSE DOWN SHARKNADO 3 director Anthony C. Ferrante Readies for one more round of mayhem.

GODZILLA VS. CTHULHU

42 GODZILLA VS. CTHULHU Hollywood discusses which giant comes out on top.

48 KOICHI KAWAKITA Remembering one of Japan's effects titans.

55 BATTON LASH The creator of SUPERNATURAL LAW breaks down his comic sensation.

59 THE ROCKY HORROR HISTORY SHOW The Time Warp is still strong after 40 years.

62 FAST LANE Eric Red talks his new novel, WHITE KNUCKLE, a return to his HITCHER days.

64 BROKEN MOON A preview of Steve Niles' latest comic for FM's new imprint.

72 NEMESIS FM's newest comic is an original *kojū* story from bestselling author Jeremy Robinson.





Demond Retail Cover
RICK BAUER



Newsstand Cover
BOB EGGLETON



SDCC 2015 Exclusive
BOB EGGLETON

OPENING WOUNDS

Recently, FM was the recipient of several Rondo Awards, one of the most prestigious awards in the monster genre, and named for classic silver screen icon Rondo Hatton. FM won best classic magazine (August Rono and his Kajin Krew won best article for their retrospective on the entire Godzilla catalog), Bob Eggleton won best professional artist, in part due to his incredible series of four covers depicting Godzilla across the years. What makes these awards all the more special is that they're completely fan chosen. It could not have happened without the ever-growing support of the Monster Kids.

Since we began creating issues in 2010 we've certainly made our share of missteps. But you have always been there to help us. We've taken your ideas, your advice, and your criticisms and tried to create a monster magazine that keeps the spirit of the original FM. We try to keep that same sense of wonderment that Forry had, that sense of family in finding out that there are others who love the same things you do, with the same passion. There are some fantastic monster mags out there that dive into the details and do an incredible job for fans looking to get into the nitty gritty. But that's never been the role of FM. We exist to get people excited about monsters. We rekindle that love in fans who may have thought monster movies were just a thing of childhood (and how excited they get at places like Comic-Con when they see the magazine again). We introduce new fans to the old glories, showing them the roots that so many of today's re-boots, re-makes, and re-imaginings sprang forth from.

Thank you, from all of us to all of you. We couldn't have done this without you and your willingness to tell us what you like (and what you don't). We'll keep doing this as long as you keep reading. Like Uncle Forry said, you can grow older, just don't grow up.

Ed Blair
Executive Editor

FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND

FORREST J ACKERMAN

Honorary Editor-in-Chief

PHILIP KIM (KONO)

Publisher

DOMINIE LEE

Publisher/Art Director

ED BLAIR

Executive Editor

HOLLY INTERLANDI

Editor

JENNIFER W. GERRITSEN

Lead Graphic Designer

JENN PHAM

Assistant Graphic Designer

DAVID WEINER

Senior Writer

CAROLINE STEPHENSON

Social Media Manager

KONG TRIBUTORS: Kelly Dunn, Edward Holland, Jenise Holland, David Lutzke, Peter Martin, Neil McNally, Alessandra Micali, Kyle Rountree

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Katchi Kawakita, Scott Snyder, Bray Wyatt, Wesley Chu, Bottom Lash, Eric Red, Anthony C. Ferrante, Joe Vink/WWE, The Folk Society, Miss Borenstein, Sean Brannan, Nancy Holder, Mike D. McCarty, Henrik Moller, Robert Rosado, Huan Vu, Bray Wyatt, photo courtesy of WWE, Inc.

BRIDE cover art by Rick Baker

GOZILLA VS CTHULHU cover art by Bob Eggleton

GOZILLA VS GHIDORAH cover art by Bob Eggleton

Special Thanks to Kevin Burns and Joe Moe

Legal Counsel: Valerie Ann Nemeth
Please direct inquiries regarding advertising to:
advertising@famousmonsters.com

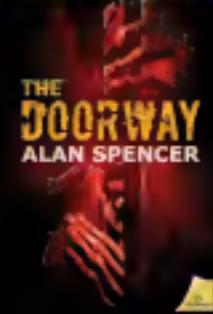
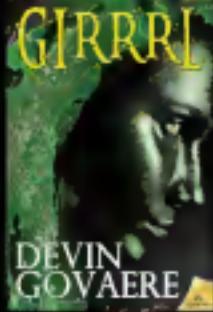
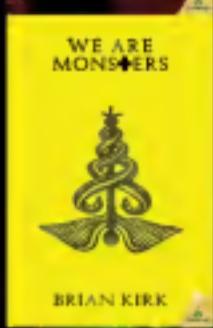
FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND

NUMBER 281, SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2015
ISSN 0014-7443

FIRST PRINTING: Published by MovieLand Classics, LLC. Famous Monsters of Filmland (words and distinctive lettering design) is a registered trademark of Philip Kim. All original content herein, unless otherwise noted, is the exclusive property of MovieLand Classics, LLC. ©2015. All Rights Reserved. All images not otherwise identified or in the public domain are and remain protected pursuant to the copyright owners or elements of the respective studio, producer, composer, filmmaker, photographer, or other rights holders, if applicable. The inclusion herein of such images is strictly for journalistic, commemorative, educational and/or commemorative purposes and use of the same is in no way intended to imply derivative, editorial, commercial or other element rights by FM other than for such use. Any unauthorized duplication, sale, distribution or otherwise is strictly prohibited and is a violation of intellectual property laws. Printed in the USA.

Forrest J Ackerman
Publisher
famousmonstersoffilm.com





TERRIFYING SUMMER READS!

TO HAUNT YOUR
DREAMS
30% OFF
COUPON CODE
DREAM30



DARK AVENGING
ANGEL
CATHERINE OWENDISH



MAYNARD SIMS
**MOTHER OF
DEMONS**




SAMHAIN®
PUBLISHING
samhainhorror.com

FM'S STAFF PICKS

Welcome to the FM's Staff Picks! FM is a company made up of fans of all types. Some love their monsters in movies, others in comic books or video games. Some prefer the monsters of the Sci-Fi world while others love their fantasy creatures (we're looking at you, Ray Harryhausen). No matter how you slice it, this office is full of all types of monsters from a countless number of sources. One of the great things about working here is that we're always discovering new things we never might have come across if it weren't for our co-workers. Some days it's almost like show and tell when someone gets a package in the office with a fun new toy or with some great piece of marketing merchandise that was totally unexpected. Staff Picks is going to be our new section that will let you in on what we're watching, reading, playing, and just generally enjoying. And feel free to email us at info@famousmonsters.com with the subject "STAFF PICKS" and let us know what new piece of monster goodness you're enjoying... and we might even include some of them!

BOOKS

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE

The Folio Society brings Philip K. Dick's alternate history masterpiece to life in this gorgeously bound book, complete with slipcase and original designs and art from Shotopop. Folio Society books are crafted with the finest materials and utmost care. www.foliosociety.com

Q ISLAND

Russell Jones imagines a Long Island, NY that has been quarantined from the rest of the world due to a virus that mutates people into brutal killers. Take a mother and her son—humanity's potential hope, insert a cannibalistic gang leader and roving bands of infected, and you've got one great read. www.samsiharapublishing.com

COMICS:

BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA

GOON writer Eric Powell teams up with John Carpenter to tell the further adventures of Jack Burton. Picking up minutes after the movie ended, Jack and the entire team are back to battle all types of demons and unnatural things. Laugh-out-loud funny, poignant, and always entertaining, the BTILC comic captures the tone and the voice of the film perfectly. www.boom-studios.com.



OCTOBER FACTION

30 DAYS OF NIGHT maestro Steve Niles spurs this action-packed tale of a family of monster hunters pulled out of retirement as evil beings new and old combine to bring terror to the world. Fast-paced, witty, and full of all manner of monster, this is one not to be missed. www.idwpublishing.com



VIDEO GAMES:

BATMAN: ARKHAM KNIGHT

An open-world Batman game where you can finally tear up the streets in the Batmobile! Kevin Conroy returns to voicing duties in the game that has sucked up a significant amount of time since it found its way into the office. Rocksteady has it out of the park again with this one. [www.batmanarkhamknights.com](http://batmanarkhamknights.com)



THE WITCHER 3: WILD HUNT

Everyone's favorite monster hunter, Geralt, is back once again—this time to protect his home from an evil of unimaginable power. In an open world even larger than SKYRIM's (seriously, it's huge), and with more monsters and missions than you can even fathom, we've passed over 100 hours into this game and still have plenty left to see and do. Truly one of the finest Action RPGs ever crafted. [www.thewitcher.com](http://thewitcher.com)



MOVIES:

KUNG FURY

Yes, we all know that MAD MAX: FURY ROAD was a masterpiece. But on the small screen Kickstarter sensation KUNG FURY has made its presence felt and taken the Cannes Film Festival by storm. An edgy to 80s action film featuring kung fu, mages, vikings, Nazis, dinosaurs, the novel and a killer theme song by David Hasselhoff—this free-to-watch film has delivered on its promise of 80s-inspired awesome. Some of the best 70 minutes you're going to spend. www.biggley.com



THE WEIRD WONDERFUL MOVIE SUMMER OF '85

By Scott Waring

The summer of '85 was a great time to go to the movies. The Totally '80s Decade had really hit its stride. MTV defined music, and its stable of pop stars rallied to end famine in Africa with the unprecedented Live Aid concert. Instead of smartphones, people fiddled with Rubik's Cubes, big hair, shoulder pads, neon pastel colors, preppy sweatshirts, and leg warmers dominated fashion, and movies strongly mirrored the styles and tastes of pop culture. Rambo reflected Ronald Reagan's staunch conservatism; the Brat Pack ruled the Hollywood meat, veteran action heroes Burt Reynolds, Clint Eastwood and Roger Moore's 007 were riding into the sunset; and colorful John Hughes-style teen comedies mixed with horror, Sci-Fi, and fantasy genres to dominate multiplexes.

Thirty years ago, the summer movie season introduced some of the most enduring, beloved, and nostalgic titles to the popcorn-eating public: *BACK TO THE FUTURE*, *FLETCH*, *PRIZZI'S HONOR*,

ELMO'S FIRE, *A VIEW TO A KILL*, *KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN*, *RAMBO: FIRST BLOOD PART II*, *NATIONAL LAMPOON'S EUROPEAN VACATION*, *VOLUNTEERS*, and *BETTER OFF DEAD* were quotable,

repeatedly watchable, and even controversial topics of conversation and some real gothy-glamour standout: Sylvester Stallone, Chevy Chase, Rob Lowe, Kelly LeBrock, John Cusack, Mel Gibson, Tim Turner, Jack Palance, and Kathleen Turner were the top talk of

the still-new *ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT*

Looking back at the broad selection of cinematic entries, here is EW's own Top 10 list culled from the horror, Sci-Fi, and fantasy genres of '85...

#10 TEEN WOLF

RELEASE DATE: August 23, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: Rod Daniel; Michael J. Fox, James Hampton, Scott Paulin, Susan Sarandon, Jerry Levine, Jay Tarses

THE PLOT: An average high school student (Fox) discovers that he's harbored the fangs...werewolf, of course, so he exploits the matador's strengths to become the most popular kid in school.

WHY WE LOVE IT: While sort of the success of *BACK TO THE FUTURE*, Michael J. Fox could do no wrong. Saddled with a goofy, low-budget project that he'd already committed to that would have likely gone straight to video with another lead, Fox transformed this high-heated high school romp about a b-ball dorking lycanthrope into a frosty, entertaining diversion—and end-of-summer hit—thanks to his manic energy and self-effacing charm.



#9 COCOON

RELEASE DATE: June 11, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: Ron Howard Steve Guttenberg, Brian Dennehy, Don Ameche, Jessica Tandy, Wilford Brimley, Helen Mirren, Maureen Stapleton, Téa Leoni, Welch

THE PLOT: The residents of a Florida retirement community stumble upon jeans containing alien cocoons that give them a second chance at their prime.

WHY WE LOVE IT: Delivering a feel-good flick that made practically everyone feel a little more spry, director Ron Howard managed to elicit sparkling performances and introduced their timeless appeal to a whole new generation. A clever post-CLOSE ENCOUNTERS/E.T. "friendly alien" tale in which clunky special effects enhance a nice character-driven plot. The film landed Don Ameche an Oscar as Best Supporting Actor as well as Best Visual Effects statuettes for Ken Ralston, Ralph McQuarrie, Scott Fisher, and David de Beville.



From some of Hollywood's best actors in their golden years, a whole new generation. A clever post-CLOSE ENCOUNTERS/E.T. "friendly alien" tale in which clunky special effects enhance a nice character-driven plot. The film landed Don Ameche an Oscar as Best Supporting Actor as well as Best Visual Effects statuettes for Ken Ralston, Ralph McQuarrie, Scott Fisher, and David de Beville.

#8 WEIRD SCIENCE

RELEASE DATE: August 2, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: John Hughes, Anthony Michael Hall, Iain Mitchell-Smith, Kelly LeBrock, Bill Paxton, Vernon Wells, Michael Berryman, Robert Downey Jr.

THE PLOT: Looking to get popular and swoon the opposite sex, social outcasts Gary and Watt (Hall and Mitchell-Smith) take inspiration from FRANKENSTEIN and construct the ultimate computer beauty (LeBrock), only to have her magically appear in the flesh. With the ultimate women on their arms, fantasy and reality collide with unexpected results.

WHY WE LOVE IT: Following the success of SIXTEEN CANDLES and THE BREAKFAST CLUB (joined with Joel Schumacher's ST. ELMO'S FIRE earlier in the summer), the John Hughes/Bill Paxton juggernaut was full speed ahead. Despite being a scatological comedy misfire on a variety of levels, WEIRD SCIENCE turned Kelly LeBrock into every teen's play mate fantasy, and delivered as much nerd-to-cage wish-fulfillment as a PG-13 rating would allow—which was not really that much. Still, the movie was packed with good music (title song provided by Oringo Bongo), amusing moments from then up-and-coming Paxton and Downey Jr., fun cameos by mutant apocalyptic biker Wells and Berryman of THE ROAD WARRIOR, and THE HILLS HAVE EYES and a can-deep, cartoonish tone that made it fun even if it made no sense whatsoever.



EXPLORERS

The adventure begins in the mountains and...



#7 EXPLORERS

RELEASE DATE: July 12, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: Joe Dante; Ellen Hawke, River Phoenix, Jason Presson, Azurduy Peterson, James Cromwell, Robert Picardo, Mary Kay Place, Dick Miller

THE PLOT: A trio of friends (Hawke, Phoenix, and Presson) create a homemade spaceship and embark on an otherworldly adventure of galactic proportions.

WHY WE LOVE IT: Dante followed up his previous summer hit *GREMLINS* with this slightly less chaotic Sci-Fi fantasy, featuring the big-screen debuts of a very young Hawke and Phoenix. Full of charm, adventure, awkward aliens, and a bevy of beloved pop culture references, this little film was the perfect alternate programming for the younger set, but stalled in its opening weekend at the box office due to audiences tuning in to *Live Aid* instead.



#6 MAD MAX BEYOND THUNDERDOME

RELEASE DATE: July 19, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: George Miller & George Ogilve, Mel Gibson, Tim Turner, Bruce Spence

THE PLOT: The sequel to *THE ROAD WARRIOR* finds Max (Gibson) stumbling onto the wasteland outpost Basterstown, where he becomes embroiled in a deadly feud that leads to a new set of conflicts and adventures.

WHY WE LOVE IT: A blotted, uneven follow-up to the lean and mean *ROAD WARRIOR*, *THUNDERDOME* nevertheless stands the test of time as a more humorous, colorful romp than the previous two *MAD MAX* films and an intriguing glimpse into the expanded post-apocalyptic world George Miller created. Gibson and Turner display a good chemistry, and despite some suspect continuity logic (why doesn't Bruce Spence's Gym Captain, now flying a plane, recognize Max? if he's a different character, why bring back Spence to play him?) and a sharp left turn into Peter Pan's Lost Boys territory during the second set, that clever Thunderdome cage fight with the bow over half of Master Blaster was still worth the price of admission.

#5 RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD

RELEASE DATE: August 16, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: Don O'Bannon, Chayanne, Beverly Randolph, James Kavaz, Don Calfa, Thom Mathews, Miguel A. Nunez Jr., Lorraine Quigley

THE PLOT: A group of partying punks pay the price for their gewgaw bigwigs when the mortals next door accidentally release experimental anti-chemicals into the air, raising the dead with a taste for brainmeat!

WHY WE LOVE IT: One of the first films to play the zombie genre purely for laughs, this irreverent and outreatingly driveline-style flick made it trendy for zombies to do evil bounces over simple flesh. It also set the bar for similar genre entries with its deft mix of comedy, horror, and top-notch practical makeup effects bolstered by the punk and speed-blender musical stylings of The Cramps, The Flesh Eaters, The Damned, SSQ, and more.



#4 FRIGHT NIGHT

RELEASE DATE: August 2, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: Tom Holland, Chris Sarandon, Wilson Ragdale, Roddy McDowall, Amanda Bearse, Stephen Geoffreys

THE PLOT: When Charley Brewster (Ragdale) becomes convinced that his next-door neighbor is a vampire, he recruits skippatical out-of-tight horror movie host Peter Vincent (McDowall) to help vanquish his foe, only to realize that the vampire is very real—and that they're in way over their heads.

WHY WE LOVE IT: A sleeper hit to close out the summer that delivered way more thrills than expected, Holland's homage to his favorite vampire and horror movies was holy-water-blessed with a smart script, an engaging cast, and top-notch visual effects (courtesy of Richard Edlund and his team, coming straight from *GHOSTBUSTERS*) that pushed the audience to the edge of their seats—and then some.



#3 GOONIES

RELEASE DATE: June 7, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: Richard Donner, Sean Astin, Kirk Browning, Corey Feldman, Ken Olin, Ke Huy Quan, Jeff Cohen, Mimsy Farmer, Robert Davi, Joe Pantoliano, Anne Francis, John Goodman

THE PLOT: Childhood pals looking to save their family home from foreclosure in the Goon Docks seek out the legendary treasure of One-Eyed Willy and tangle with bumbling crooks along the way.

WHY WE LOVE IT: Based on a story by Steven Spielberg, *GOONIES* proved to be pure fan Sloppy, sunny, and care-free. The film assembled an all-star cast—some of their future screen heroes—for what amounted to an *INDIANA JONES* movie for the kiddies: charming, cheeky, and full of memorable lines, who can forget Chunk's "Truffle Shuffle" or Sloth



#2 PEE-WEE'S BIG ADVENTURE

RELEASE DATE: August 9, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: Tim Burton. Paul Reubens, Elizabeth Dushku, Mark Holton, Dennis Solinger, Todd Olsen, James Brown, Morgan Pauchant, Phil Hartman, Jason Hervey, Jim Hanks, Twisted Sister, Milton Berle

THE PLOT: When Pee-wee's beloved bike is stolen, he heads out on a cross-country odyssey to reclaim it—and learns a few life lessons along the way.

WHY WE LOVE IT: Tim Burton's debut feature captured all the childlike enthusiasm, naivety, and warped humor of Paul Reubens' inimitable character while giving the lead-mouthed *PEE-WEE'S PLAYHOUSE* host a broad cinematic canvas to play with. Packed with memorable gags and giddy pop-art production design—plus a few cameo surprises along the way—*BIG ADVENTURE*'s simple, clear-cut plot momentum, timeless feel, and feel-good disposition made the film a goofy, giddy instant classic.



#1 BACK TO THE FUTURE

RELEASE DATE: July 3, 1985

DIRECTOR & STARS: Robert Zemeckis, Michael J. Fox, Christopher Lloyd, Leah Thompson, Crispin Glover, Thomas F. Wilson

THE PLOT: After being forced to jump into Doc Brown's (Lloyd) DeLorean time machine, Marty McFly (Fox) unwittingly prevents his parents (Thompson and Glover) from falling in love with each other. With precious time ticking away, he must set the stage for them to meet at the high school dance—or risk being erased from history himself!

WHY WE LOVE IT: Even when he wasn't giddy-silly directing, Steven Spielberg had the magic touch on many of the films that he executive produced during the '80s, including *GREMLINS*, *GOONIES*, and *POLTERGEIST*, and *FUTURE* had the Midas touch. Teaming up with Zemeckis, who had played with audience expectations to great success with his innovative comedy-drama *ROMANCING THE STONE*, the filmmakers delivered a well-crafted *FUTURE* that deftly balanced Sci-Fi elements with laugh-out-loud humor and rewarding, precise set-ups and pay-offs. And themes of family, friendship, and forging one's own destiny. Fox and the winning cast displayed offscreen onscreen chemistry to spare. Hands-down the best film of the summer, *BACK TO THE FUTURE* is fondly ascribed three decades later.

RISE (FROM YOUR GRAVE) AND SHINE!

J. Anthony Kosar's
"Dead of Night" Lamp

*Award-winning Sculptor,
Illustrator and FX Artist
J. Anthony Kosar designed the
zombie lamp base

*Lamp base sculpture is hand-
sculpted and hand-painted in
every ghoulish detail

*The 10" wide cloth lamp shade
with moon and tree branches
adds eerie ambience

*Perfectly sized at about 16 inches
high for versatile display options

*Includes on/off switch, long-
lasting CFL bulb and Certificate
of Authenticity

YOUR SATISFACTION IS GUARANTEED!

The "Dead of Night" Lamp features
original design by former FX designer
and artist J. Anthony Kosar is a
fantastic value at four convenient
installments of \$33.75, for a total of
\$135.00. There's no risk in ordering
because it comes with an unconditional,
money-back guarantee that
lasts a full year. The editor is limited
to just 295 casting days, so don't
wait. Send no money now. Return the
Reservation Form right away
for the low limited edition numbers
collectors crave!

Stands
16" High



FREE
CFL bulb
included.
Glow-melt
medium base
An impressive
scaled size of
16 in. H.

www.delphicollectibles.com/Zone14

RESERVATION APPLICATION

SEND NO MONEY NOW



9345 Milwaukee Avenue - Niles, IL 60714-1393

YES. Please reserve the Dead of Night Lamp for me as
described in this announcement.
Limit one per order.

Please Respond Promptly

Mr. Ms.

Name, Please Print Clearly

Address

City

State

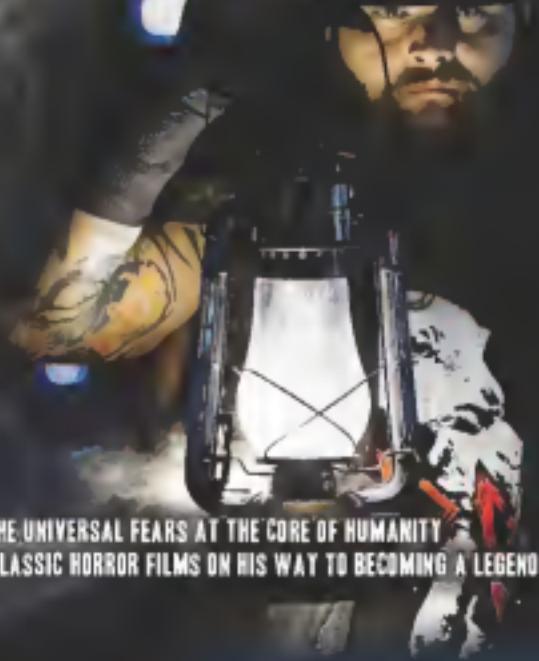
Zip

815-587-2186-893831

© 2012 J. Anthony Kosar
All rights reserved.
Model Number: 01-0070-000-00

return for a full refund and service charges within 30 days of casting date. Please note all sales after casting
process for surface damage. Sales subject to pre-paid shipping and handling.

THE FACE OF FEAR



WWE'S BRAY WYATT TAPS IN TO THE UNIVERSAL FEARS AT THE CORE OF HUMANITY AND DOSES THEM WITH A LOVE OF CLASSIC HORROR FILMS ON HIS WAY TO BECOMING A LEGEND

BY ED BLAIR

Some would call Bray Wyatt a bad guy, a monster even. But as he tells it, he's just on a mission to open the eyes of the world to the horrors around us. And if he has to crack a few skulls in the process, that's just the cost of truth. While his work in the ring is skilled, it is his ability to deliver swaying monologues—infused by some of cinema's most terrifying moments—that has made Bray Wyatt a WWE Superstar. As he prepares for SummerSlam, he sits down with EW to give us a look into the creation of his harbinger of doom.

Famous Monsters. You've really embraced the idea of fear as a weapon. The way you evoke such vivid and dark imagery has a very cinematic quality to it. I have to imagine that horror movies played a role somewhere along the way.

Bray Wyatt: There were two movies that cut to the core of me, that terrified me as a child. One was *THE OMEN*. I was always around religious people and it was such a realistic fear. When you're a child and you're taught this holy book, and then you see this movie that's portraying everything you're taught is true... it gave me nightmares. Why I was a child watching this I'll never know. I think it's part of the sickness that has grown with me as I've gotten older.

The other was *Freddy Krueger*. He was superterrifying to me because he was in your dreams. It wasn't like these other slasher movies where it's just a man coming after you while it feels unreal. But *Freddy* attacked you while you were dreaming so you couldn't sleep at night. And when you're a child and you know that man is coming for you in your nightmares, you don't want

to close your eyes. Those two were my introduction for my love of the horror genre.

EW. Did it make you want to stop watching horror films at first? Or were you fascinated and finding yourself drawn to seeking out more?

Bray: I was drawn to it. To this day my taste is spent listening to conspiracy podcasts and watching horror movies constantly because as a child, there was something sparked in me to want to know what else is out there in the world. Not everything is what we see. It's so much deeper and there's so many layers. For horror movies, I look for the creative ones. I can watch a B-horror movie and it won't excite me unless it's really, really bad. I like to be surprised. But I feel like it is starting to get more creative these days. Like *Cabin in the Woods*, I did not expect what I

got out of that movie. It really put things in perspective, like maybe there is some hope for horror movies out there.

FM: But you and what you do, you like the movies, is really about using the fans behind a common cause. I mean, FM was founded as a way to bring together all those who were made to feel weird because they loved monsters.

BW: I've had many discussions about this with the twisted fans. [Horror movie director David] Cronenberg: "We hit it off right away because we are one and the same. We are legion, we're horror movie kids. They kind of understood me and I love their work."

AMERICAN MARY was a very creative take on a horror film. And it was very unexpected and was a beautiful piece of work.

FM: What's your go-to, the one film that you always come back to without fail?

BW: Leatherface is my all-time favorite horror character. That'll put it in perspective for you. When I was in grade school I was Leatherface for Halloween. They didn't make Leatherface costumes because the movie was made in the 70s and this was the 1990s. I had taken a butcher's apron—which is something that

had always followed me—and I sprayed it with red paint. Then I took a Jason hockey mask and paper-mâché'd brown paper to it so it would look like skin. I remember walking out and everybody asking me who I was. I kept telling them Leatherface, but no one understood me. But now he's back and he's progressed as a character. With the latest, TEXAS CHAINSAW, he's like a good guy—which I'm not sure how I feel about that. But I like that they brought back Gunnar Hansen, the original Leatherface actor. That was a nice little touch. I love his progression. And I've grown into this similar body type as Leatherface. I've just always had this connection with him.

Hannibal Lecter is a favorite, too, Max. Cody, as well. Both versions of CAPE FEAR, with Robert Mitchum and Robert DeNiro. These are the kinds of things that I've followed, as well as real life serial killers. There's nothing more cold than listening to them.

But here's one of my favorites. And it's possibly the scariest scene that I've ever seen in a horror movie, and that was in THE STRANGERS. They're just wearing these simple turtleneck naps. And they're standing in a circle and Lis [Tyler] asks, "Why are you doing that to me?" And the girl replies,

"Because you were home." What could be more frightening than that? You did nothing wrong except for show up to your house on this day they decided to go on this rampage. FM: It's interesting because so many of these influences you speak about have a large psychological component to their fear. Max, Cody or someone like Hannibal Lecter, who's behind protective glass and can't even get to you, is more terrifying at times than the guy behind your door with a knife. And that's something you've embraced. Your entrance is this long procession that feels like a death march for your opponent. The arena is completely dark save for the tea of thousands of cell phone lights (the百姓), and a chorus of fans singing it's almost like by the time you've reached the ring your opponent probably doesn't have much fight left in them, like they've been broken.

BW: People fear Hannibal Lecter because he's already in your mind. To deal with a real life Hannibal Lecter is to deal with someone who is always five steps ahead of you, no matter what you do. Then you have to look at everything you do and always be fearful of every move you make and wonder if you're falling into his trap. The fear is the passion that says no matter



Bray's infamous Spider Walk, born of a spontaneous moment when possessed by his alter ego, Sane.

what you do you'll never be free of him. And that's why they fear me. Because I am everywhere. I am not one. I am a nation. I am all. And that's who I am. I tell people the truth about the world. And that's very Hannibal Lecter. You never know what sick, twisted plot he has in his head that while he's trying to convince you of one thing he's got his hands behind your back in a million different places.

And that was one thing I was very admiring when I came up with WWE, that

He's never malicious until provoked. In the vignette I was talking about him, having the body of a monster and the mind of a child. Unfortunately, it never saw the light of day. But hopefully some day it will.

FM: You're a fan of the classic Universal horror films?

BW: As a child I had all of them. I've watched them a hundred times. One that I take away and that I've always loved



into adulthood and have their children, and that's how the movement began. *LORD OF THE FLIES* is similar for me too. It's these children and their primitive instincts that come out and it becomes about survival. *CHILDREN OF THE DAMNED*, too. Turning children into a threat. Now that's terrifying.

And that's it. It's all about the feelings that they invoke. A horror movie makes you feel angry about what's around the corner. It's not just about a monster. And I love a good monster flick. But it's that anticipation that evokes that euphoric experience while watching it. And that's why we watch. At least, that's why I watch.



we were horror movie characters. But we were characters that walk in the light. Because a creature that walks in the light is the most frightening thing in the world. He's not wearing a mask. There's no jewels or me being a werewolf. This is a monster that walks among you, that walks the same streets and eats at the same restaurants as your family. That's the real fear.

We shot a short vignette about the character Erick Rowan [original tag team partner of Bray Wyatt in *The Wyatt Family*], and Erick Rowan is Frankenstein's Monster. Erick Rowan isn't evil. We all like to create characters that people can associate with. In the vignette we had him doing simple-minded things. He doesn't like you looking at his face. He likes animals and wears the lens mask. And I think those are the kinds of things people missed on us. But that's who Erick Rowan is supposed to be, the Frankenstein Monster.

is CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON Growing up around water, and having this wild-looking creature that can just pull you down when you're most susceptible was such a terrifying thought for me.

FM: What about horror literature, anything from Lovecraft to Stephen King? Do you draw inspiration there?

BW: Stephen King is a big one. Another thing that I've used is, if you look at *CHILDREN OF THE CORN*, and *IT*—I'm a huge Pennywise fan. That's where my moniker, "Eater of Worlds", came from. He says, "I am the eater of worlds, and of children." Obviously I wouldn't say that about children. But I've used children in the pod where they walk with me to the ring because it's kind of a subliminal message of that awakening happening. What's more terrifying than these children who embrace the message and then go



They can tear the scream from your throat.



WOLFEN (1981)
NOW AVAILABLE ON BLU-RAY



NOT RATED

PG-13

R

R

PG-13

WARNERARCHIVE.COM

THOUSANDS OF FILMS & TV SERIES DIRECT FROM THE STUDIO'S VAULT

©2015 Turner Entertainment Co. and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved

W y t c h h u n t i n g

COMIC WRITING JUGGERNAUT SCOTT SNYDER
REFLECTS ON THE FIRST ARC OF HIS IMAGE HORROR SERIES

by Holly Interlandi

WARNING: The following interview contains spoilers for *WITCHES* Issues 1-6.

Fandom Monsters: So, why witches? What is it about them that tempts you? Is it what about them made you decide to make them掌管? Scott Snyder: I've always found them scary! Even the most ridiculous ones, like the green-skinned three-monkey widow. They're supposed to be an extension of us in some way, they've sort of made their humanity for power, for some sort of abstinence that goes beyond what we understand. "They can do things that are completely proscribed or somehow exist outside of the natural cycle. There's a real fulfillment that goes along with them in the extension idea of giving something up to get things you're not supposed to have. And witches, at their core, have always had that sort of mythology. They live deep in the woods, they're combinatoric, and they have weird abilities. Those are the things in the DNA of the classic monster. So I knew that using witches— even if we ended up transforming them or making them something really different from anything people might associate with them before the series—and the idea of having a monster that would only come after you if you came to them first, or only come after people who were given to them by others, allowed them to become deeply scary monsters, because they're extensions of darker desires that we have. The monsters are scary, but they're scary because people go to them and use them and touch them with this "pledge" stuff so that in the middle of the night the witches will come and drag you away. It's your neighbors that are even scarier than them.

FM: And they're constantly terrifying in

that book. You mentioned just they're combinatoric. I guess I hadn't realized that. I wasn't until the final issue that I saw through all of the violence. It's been a slow burn for a while, but in the final chapter one of the witches just chomps on Charlie's shoulder.

SS: One of the fun things about coming up with new versions of classic monsters is to make them only a couple inches off of reality. So Jack and I would talk about it—why are they combinatoric? Why do they have eyes on the side of their heads? We'd need to come up with scientific reasons. I always feel like I have a degree in comic book science—as opposed to my wife, who's an actual doctor. I'll be talking to someone at a party of hers who's a cardiologist or something, and I'll be like, "Well, when it comes to the witch heart." [laughs]

FM: You know all this totally like science that you've made up about your monsters. And with that, we decided that their bodies can't actually absorb the different amino acids and proteins in animal meat. So they eat people and can't really tolerate other kinds of protein. Children are their favorites because they have the least amount of exposure to different pathogens over time. They're the purest meat, and the most virile.

SS: That's certainly a throwback to watch stories like *House* and *Grey's*, where she essentially boils them for eating.

SS: We tried to work in a lot of that stuff. The part of the bewitch where they cook the kids is called the cauldron. And the entrance to the bewitch, the manorhouse that they kind of set up on the passageway—they grow ginger on it, which isn't supposed to grow on trees. It grows along the ground. But sometimes you'll find jets with a strange insect smell, and these balloons,

which is ginger looking ginger plants hanging around in our mythology; that's where the legend of the gingerbread horse comes from. There's actually quite a bit of *House* and *Grey's* mythology in the second arc, which focuses loosely on Sailor having joined this group, the Irony, who has lost witches all across the world. They have knowledge of the deepest and most embedded burns across the country and around the globe. She learns a lot more about the history of the witches, different things that have happened throughout history, and where the most powerful witches are.

FM: You'll get back to Sailor in a minute, and we may have talked about that before, but I wanted to mention that comics are unique in the way that they're serialized in months the way that novels used to be in the early 20th century, when you'd read one chapter and it would say "Stay tuned for next month's installment!" With a book like *WITCHES*, how important is a single issue to you? Or is it all about the end game?

SS: It's hard. It's a balance. That's a really good question because there were times I kind of wished we had done it as a complete book, but there are times when I'm incredibly glad we did serialize it. There are action muscles that I get really used to when being one book like *BATMAN*, which really depends on that propulsive engine of "Here to next month! How is he going to get out of this giant Riddler and trap with shorts?" or something. I actually just wrote a scene with shorts, so I have shorts on the brain. [laughs] So sometimes I feel that I don't like the format, but with a book like *WITCHES* I have to remind the urge to let these muscles start working in a way that's inorganic to a series like this. It would be easy to make the series much more visit and bourgeoisie, with more of the "Will she escape?" The witches are just ornate! And pass the trailer! A lot of times I would talk to Jack [and] be like, "You know what? I'm going to do this for this issue. And he'd be like no, no, that's too much of a cliffhanger. It's finding the balance, to avoid that urge to make it a highly plot-driven story and keep it as organic as we can."

SS: [laughs] And that's what it is, which is a more darkly psychological and emotional story. Ultimately, I was really shocked by how well the series did with readers in that regard. When we started, I was pretty convinced that it was going to be a very small book, not like *SAVAGE* or any of these books that are so bright and big and expansive. This is such a

mean, twisted, intricate little book. The first that it's done so well is incredibly inspiring to me and the rest of the team. What it made us realize is that there's room for books that aren't necessarily high octane serialized adventure, or really interested with a largely expansive universe. There's room for every kind of book in the indie world right now. As hokey as it sounds, as long as it's something you're passionate about and trying to make important to you personally, there will be a robust readership.

FM: And I think it also is because it's not like those big blockbuster books. I've had people telling me that it's one of the first comics they've ever been genuinely wrapped out by. There are a lot of horror books with a lot of monsters, but *WITCHES* is genuinely creepy and that's a success! SS: Well, thanks! I appreciate that.

FM: Speaking of "endings"—you're never afraid to submit the status quo! When I read the last issue... I don't think anybody was expecting that kind of finale, the complete upending of everything that happens. Do you do that as a kind of personal challenge or do you just like surprising people?

SS: Honestly, my endings are always built in from the very beginning. Whether it's *BATMAN* or *WITCHES* I have a couple of angles where writing processes are really different than mine, who find it really boring to write a story they already know the end of, so they figure it out as they go. But for me, the endings are crucial. I can't even start until I know where it's going. The intention with *WITCHES* was to give an ending that feels surprising but inevitable in the sense that you get there and think, I didn't see that coming, but when you look back you go oh, that's where they were headed all along. Above all, an ending that makes the most sense emotionally. And the story is largely about Charlie wrestling with how selfish he can be, and how selfish a lot of us as adults and people can be. I mean, it's very hard to find the selflessness that it takes to be a good parent. I constantly can't, a lot of the time, these are days when you want to be like, I don't want to care about *your* anymore! *I want more time for myself! I want more peace!* But I will never stop caring, will I? [laughs]

SS: Those feelings are normal, but I think a lot of us struggle with them because you don't want to be the parent who's sitting there thinking these things. You feel it's somehow bad to be frustrated at all. And that's where the witches come in. They're there to tell you a way out

of every natural predicament you might find yourself in, whether it's aging, parenting... whatever it is you don't want to look at because you're frightened of it, or something you wish you could somehow alter but know you can't... they're there to say yeah, we can do that. So with this arc, the way it ends is meant to be Charlie doing the most selfless thing that he can and redressing himself after a period of being pretty selfish and a bit bitter in Sailor. It is certainly shocking, but my hope is that when you look back you see that it's been building to this from the get go. It's Sailor's origin story. It's meant to say, this is the strength that Charlie showed, and in doing so he passes along a message to her about who she is. It gives her more strength for the second arc, and for the series, when she's really going to need to be brave to face what's coming.

FM: Yeah, one of my favorite things about the first issue is that you bring the selfless parent all the way around by establishing that the book is about parental fears, but then showing that the worst fear a parent can have is losing their child. I mean, I'm not a parent, but I have a dog, so I sort of get it. [laughs] And in the face of that kind of fear, the witches—the monsters—almost become silly. So Charlie is able to almost joke about it when he sacrifices himself.

SS: I wanted him to find himself again. It's like when Indiana Jones is with Short Round and goes "Hey kid, it's me." That moment after he's seen the most horrific reflection of himself, and he's seen what his own self thinks he wants and is capable of, and it's so repulsive to him at that moment. I want you as a reader to think he might be going along with that. And when you realize that he isn't, I want it to be a celebration of who Charlie really is, and who Sailor is. I remember talking to Jack and telling him I was going to put in some humor there, and he was all about it. I've got such good collaborators, I gotta say, as a sidenote. It's been such a joy working with Jack and Matt [Heplingsworth, colorist] and Clem [Roberts, letterer] and David [Brothers, editor]. I get to stand on the shoulders of giants in this industry all the time and get so much credit. I feel bad sometimes. I didn't know who I pledged to in another life to get to do this, but I have it really easy when it comes to having anything I do look great. [laughs]

FM: It's absolutely a very unique looking book. Not just with Jack's inks, but



the splatter effect that Matt Hollingsworth has chosen to use—I don't think I've seen anything like it in a comic book before.

SS: Yeah, when I was pitching the book to them, I said I would promise to my things I'd never tried before as a writer. And while I've certainly done horror before, *AMERICAN VAMPIRE* is more... a high adventure drama over the top historical epic. [laughs] Whereas *SEVERED* was much more cerebral and small, but in a different way—not quite as personal. *WYTCHES* was like... I'm going to go and be on a confessional and talk about rightness that I think is clearly autobiographical. I said to them, all I'd ask is that you guys push yourselves, and don't be afraid of trying things that you think might be good for the story, even if it's something outside your comfort zone. And both of them did that—the way that Jock focused on the characters in this very stark way, and the way Matt brought this almost hallucinatory effect to the colors, which gets more and more pronounced in moments when we're panning and zooming of what's happening. They both found their own visual language for it.

FM: I also wanted to talk about the first issue in particular, because it opens with an illustration from one of Charlie's children's books, and then flashes back to the present. I'm a huge fan of parallel narratives in general, when you tell two stories at the same time and the dialogue from one crosses over with the other. When you're plotting a competing narrative like the one, is it something you do side by side with the main storyline? For example, Charlie speaking at the book signing. Or do you plot the scenes separately and then put them together?

SS: I do usually plot them together. I actually have an easel with paper on it, and it looks really dumb, but it helps me out a tremendous amount to draw the arcs next to each other. Sometimes, like in *AMERICAN VAMPIRE* with "Death

Race", there'll be three or four storylines going at once, all from different moments in the character's past and present. Or in stories like in *BATMAN*, occasionally I'm dealing with multiple characters with multiple storylines so you're going all over the place at once. And writing them on the board makes sense not just for balancing and estate, but for what's most powerful when these arcs cross at the same moment—or even conflict, so you have moments that are completely conquestrated or synergistic. You'll have moments like when Sophie in the past is struggling to crush the farm wheel and is entirely terrified of her father, and in the present she's trying her best to brave cleaning up that pen, the cauldron where she's being cooked. You have opposite emotional states there, but similar actions. Or you'll have the stories you mentioned—where in the past, Charlie has reached a place of peace in the past, but in the present he's at his worst. So from the past to the present he goes from bad to good, but in the present he goes from good to bad. You start off thinking he's okay, and then he goes down, and in the end he sort of redeems himself in those final moments at the same time that he has some sense of peace in the past. I try to map them out. It sounds really pretentious and silly to talk about it, but when I map them out I think of one as the bass line and the top as the main melody, and you can add as many things beneath the surface as you want as long as they add texture or emotional layers that don't just repeat what you're doing in the main story in ways that become redundant. FM: That doesn't sound pretentious at all! That makes perfect sense. And that first chapter does start out with the narration, "This is not an ending." Which is really powerful, because it certainly feels like one for some people who may have thought the book was going to continue being about Charlie, but I admire the status quo change because it's so much about parents bequeathing responsibilities and such onto their kids—it's not an ending, it's just a tonerface. The best horror stories, in fact, are the ones that take that concept and indicate that it could continue indefinitely. So if you could, please talk a bit more about how you see *WYTCHES* continuing.

SS: Sure! As I said before, this first arc is Sailor's origin story and was meant to be intimate and personal and clear about the bar we were shooting for in terms of how the book would be about things that were

autobiographical, feels that I struggle with personally, whether it's Sailor's anxiety or Charlie's frustration at being a parent. But at the end of the day, it is a horror series with a very broad mythology, and in the second are we really get to explore that. Which humors are the deepest and darkest around the country? Who are the Irons, and how did they get usurped by people who follow the witches? How many follow the witches? Are there different species of witches—what are these nested ones at the end that seem much bigger than the others? And thematically, the second arc sort of invents the first, because the first is about the wonder and sense of being a parent, while the second is about being a child who has to let go of your parents. I think at our age, a lot of us are starting to see our parents get older, and some of my friends are starting

to lose their parents. But at Sailor's age, there's a lot to be said about those moments in your life when you define yourself and leave your parents behind, figuratively. And she's really wrestling with that. Not to give too much away, but she catches wind that it might be possible that some people who are punished by the witches for their betrayal are kept alive, in a very hellish state.

FBI: That's perfect, because in the end you never really do see what happens to Charlie. You just sort of assume. But that doesn't have to be the case!

SS: Or knowing us, it could be even worse. [laughs]

FBI: I'd like to end with saying that



part of what I love about your writing is that you have such a perfect grasp on what makes good storytelling in general, which I feel can only come from reading. So what are you reading right now?

SS: There's a horror book that just started by Brian Buccellato called *SONS OF THE DEVIL*, that I'm really liking. *NAILBITER* by Jeff Lemire... I love *WICKED + DIVINE*, and Jeff Lemire's *DESCENDER*. It's so killer. It's one of my favorite things he's ever done, and where it's headed is phenomenal. I thought Stephen King's *REVIVAL* was great, really enjoyed that. And I'm really proud of the bat line at DC right now. *BATGIRL* is looking ass, and there's *GOTHAM ACADEMY* by Becky [Clossen] and Brenden [Fletcher]. I feel like it's a great moment in comics right now, because both the indie world and the superhero world are starting to move forward during a little bit more than they have in the past, and to see them moving new voices in, new kinds of creators, new kinds of characters, new storylines... it's a really good moment, and I'm thrilled to be part of it.





BALL CAPS. TRUCKER HATS. FIND YOUR STYLE TODAY.

AVAILABLE NOW AT CAPTAINCO.COM

OF GODS AND MONSTERS



R. Baker
© 1980



What *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* CAN TEACH TODAY'S FILMMAKERS

BY RANDY VERTIN

On a warm summer's evening in 1978, my friends and I stuck around the back of a drive-in movie theater in Vista Naya, California, and watched JAWS 2 as we watched the picture through the broken slats in the wooden fence that rimmed the parking area (No speakers for illegal viewers!) We all loved JAWS—it cemented my fear of the water and remains one of the most nail-biting, terrifying movies I've ever seen—but the idea of yet another shark terrorizing the residents of Amityville just sounded...silly.

So I can't quite imagine how movie audiences in 1935 reacted to the idea of a sequel to 1931's FRANKENSTEIN, especially one titled BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN. Did the idea itself

sound silly? The original theatrical trailer, which you can watch on YouTube as I just did while I'm writing this, starts with the on-screen warning, "If you have a weak heart, better leave now." After several action-filled scenes shot by, including images from the final few minutes of the film, the trailer promises "You'll witness a lifetime of entertainment in two hours," which would be quite a trick, since the total running time is just 74 minutes. (Perhaps they rounded up?) No matter, Universal Studios made the movie look just like its other horror pictures of the era, such as THE MUMMY and THE INVISIBLE MAN.

Director James Whale had other tricks up his sleeve, though. He'd initially

rejected an offer to direct the sequel to FRANKENSTEIN, preferring to keep his slate diverse. He proceeded to helm two melodramas (IMPATIENT MAIDEN, ONE MORE RIVER), a psychodrama (THE KISS BEFORE THE MIRROR), and a comedy (BY CANDLELIGHT), as well as THE OLD DARK HOUSE which established a horror sub-genre (people with suspicious backgrounds gather in a mysterious location, where bad things happen), and THE INVISIBLE MAN, which is far darker than anything else he made in that era.

When Universal granted Whale greater freedom, he was determined to make a very different movie than the original BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, then, can

be considered a summation of his career to that point, containing elements of humor, melodrama, pathos, and comedy. The opening sequence, in which Mary Shelley (Elsa Lanchester) enjoys a lively exchange with Percy Shelley (Douglas Wilcox) and Lord Byron (Gavin Gordon) about her novel FRANKENSTEIN, cleverly alludes to a brief recap of what happened in the movie four years before. It is a true postmodern scenario, with the creator of the story commenting on her intentions to teach a moral lesson. (An inscription made when I first saw BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN some years ago: "I first saw BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN when I first saw BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN some years ago. I couldn't help but wonder why so few—if any?—subsequent sequels have borrowed that opening as a means of setting the sequel apart from and different from the original. Wouldn't it be great if INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM began with Steven Spielberg sitting around a fire asking George Lucas if he had any other great ideas for a modern-day adventure movie?")

From that sparkling introduction, BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN sweeps into doom and gloom, as the Monster turns out to still be alive, promptly killing a married couple before allowing Morene (Van O'Connor) to flee into the night, screaming a warning. A macabre encounter between the barely-walking Henry Frankenstein (Colin Clive) and his fiancee Elizabeth (Valerie Hobson) leads to a meeting between Henry and his old mentor Doctor Pretorius (Ernest Thesiger). Whereas Henry was the mad,



driven scientist in the first movie, Doctor Pretorius is the changed leader in the sequel, happily showing off his tiny creation, which he calls 'monsters'.

That scene steers the movie, jarringly yet pleasantly, into comic territory. It's as though Whale slapped the audience in the face, reprimanding everyone, 'C'mon, you can't take this stuff seriously!' Pretorius preens as he introduces his creatures

one by one, each getting a moment in the spotlight and each displaying a funny comic identity, from an uppity queen to a bumbling king to a righteous archbishop to a spinning bollerna to an angry devil to a resigned mermaid.

Frankenstein sits and stares slack-jawed but bowled over by his former mentor's charismatic enthusiasm. Pretorius wants to prove his own work, and has seized upon Henry's creation of the Monster as an opportunity to marry their experimental activities. But Henry is exhausted, still recovering from a near-death experience and shaken to his bones by recent events. He told Elizabeth a little earlier in the evening that he still felt destined to uncover the secrets of life, death, and immortality



While clearly not in a normal frame of mind, he is annoyed by Pretorius and sets about the creation of another monster, this time a female body.

Meanwhile, the Monster (Boris Karloff) has escaped into the woods where he encounters a kindly blind hermit (O.P. Hegge). The hermit provides a place of refuge for the Monster, sharing his food and wine, and teaching him a few vital words ('Wine good'). But the Monster's creation from hitherto seen ends, as hunters track him down and force him into flight. He meets Pretorius, learns of the doctor's plan to provide him with a mate, and decides to stick around Pretorius, over the manipulator, coax the Monster into collaborating with him so as to pressure Frankenstein back into service (Played at the nerves! Henry sought his own refuge from sadness by marrying Elizabeth, and initially balks at completing the experiment.) Soon enough, the Bride comes to life, and the movie races to an exciting conclusion.

Whatever audiences had anticipated to advance, the finished product clearly exceeded those expectations. Whale had done what probably seemed impossible and something he himself didn't seem to think was possible: he topped the original. He did a by not replicating what had worked before. Sure, from a visual

standpoint, the film was an offspring of the original and a cousin to the other Universal monster movies, which tapped German impersonation as an strong inspiration. And Whale still kept his creature very mobile, pushing in closer at key moments, pulling back to show a grander scheme or crowd. But rather than sticking solely to horror mode, Whale freely mixed genres to fit the mood for each scene. Thus, a undeniably romantic encounter could slide surprisingly into weird horror and the terrors of chase and pursuit could give way to gentle moments with a hermit.

James Whale overcame his initial reluctance, freed up his mind from past concepts, and made a dazzling movie that stands up to close inspection today. He set a wonderful example for filmmakers faced with the challenge of making new movies based on well-established properties. After all, the 1931 movie version of FRANKENSTEIN certainly was not the first adaption of Shelley's novel. The first stage production was mounted in 1826, and the first film produced was a silent version released in 1910, with other versions coming in 1915 and 1920. It's safe to say that movie audiences in 1931 were aware of the premise, even if they weren't soled in the 'monsters are among us'

concept that would eventually give rise to today's superhero-obsessed culture.

Nowadays, the challenge is similar to what Whale faced in 1935 (and, to circle back to the opening of this article, what the makers of JAWS 2 faced in 1978): how do you make something new and distinctive without 'repeating' yourself? When SUPERMAN emerged at the tail end of 1978, it represented something fresh in that era: a very positive tale of a very heroic character with extraordinary powers. It followed on the upbeat heroes of STAR WARS the year before, with good soundly defeating evil, and pointed forward to the blockbusters of the next decade. Still both SUPERMAN and STAR WARS were very much contained in their self-selected drawers: they were light-hearted adventures with just a touch of menace. When BATMAN came along in 1989, it pulled buttons by depicting a more cynical take on heroes and presenting a more



OPPOSITE: Elsa Lanchester is revealed as Frankenstein's infant creation. THIS PAGE: A lobby card for BRIDE, and promotional stills featuring one of Hollywood's shortest-lived, yet most celebrated, romances.



told and thrillingly expressed action movie. Like *BRIDE*

OF FRANKENSTEIN, George Miller's *MAD MAX: FURY ROAD* draws upon its antecedents without compelling a retweak to

know what's going on. It's a silentless chase picture that nonetheless includes genuine insight into its primary characters. It depicts true equality between men and women as part of a team; they are heroic and laudable personalities as they fight ferociously for survival.

But one movie is not enough: multiple studios are involved in making franchise movies at the moment, and they all want our attention. Warner Brothers, the studio behind *MAD MAX*, also controls DC Comics properties, and their strategy since the conclusion of Nolan's *BATMAN* trilogy in 2012 has been to lay low. Zack Snyder's *MAN OF STEEL* appeared to be the starting point, arcing *Superman* toward a grittier, more destructive series of scenarios with a smaller touch of lightheartedness. But how do you build on that? The studio decided to pull back and wait on making any more solo superhero films until it could launch its team-up epic against *BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE*, due out in February 2016. Sticking with the team-up concept, *SUICIDE SQUAD* promises to showcase a group of villainous sounding anti-heroes, hoping that an even darker vision of superpowered characters will help distinguish them from their male.

For their part, Fox will reintroduce *FANTASTIC FOUR* this summer. It looks to be a darker take on the characters than in the past. Speaking of dark, *DEADPOOL*

wants to be a stand-alone champion for those who favor R-rated action; the rating itself would set the movie apart from its superpowered brethren. It's due next year along with the next entry in Fox's flagship franchise, *X-MEN: APOCALYPSE*, whose title makes clear its intention to follow in path through the darkness.

Both studios are competing with Marvel in the "dark world" sweepstakes, exemplified by the obviously-razed *THOR: THE DARK WORLD* in 2013. While the so-called Phase 1 of Marvel films were on the bright and bubbly side, things have turned more menacing in the aftermath of *THE AVENGERS* in 2012, not just with *Thor* but also *Iron Man* and *Captain America* as well. For Phase 2, scheduled to kick off with *CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR* next year, ten films are planned over the next few years. There's a hint that Marvel studios still needs to vary the content of their films: *DOCTOR STRANGE* gives an opportunity to delve into black magic and other horror themes. *SPIDER-MAN* heading back to high school suggests the chance to explore that adolescent setting. *BLACK PANTHER* can provide a showcase for an African superhero. *CAPTAIN MARVEL* should get a female superhero front and center.

Beyond the characters and settings, however, all the studios—including Universal, which is planning to relaunch all their famed monster properties over the next few years—need to consider again the lessons of *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. Merely, as it applies here, that means it's good to allow creative people free reign in order to fashion truly new takes on old heroes: not the same old stale characters in funky outfits. Also, it's perfectly fine to mix genres, as long as you know what you're doing. The more these merely insatiable whimsicks to break up long scenes of exposition and pretending you're making comedy and drama. (You're not.) Otherwise, the long-dreaded "superhero movie fatigue" will become real and audiences will stay away in droves from movies that sound silly and not in a good way, but in a way that signals the latest sequel or reboot or prequel or team-up is not worth their hard-earned time and money, no matter how hard the marketing sells it.

JAWS 2 is better remembered for us than for anything in the movie itself, so it now serves as a cautionary advisory to the film community. "Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water..." Even a sure thing needs to have the content to back it up, or it'll start to smell like fish after three days.

distantly view of villains, an initially creative formula that was followed for much of the next decade.

Superhero movies tilted back toward the light-hearted side of the equation with Bryan Singer's *X-MEN* (2000) and Sam Raimi's *SPIDER-MAN* (2002), while the dark side drew greater emphasis in 2005 with the release of Christopher Nolan's *BATMAN BEGINS* (2005). That same year, however, ton Tim Story's rather weak *FANTASTIC FOUR* made almost as much money as Nolan's dark odyssey. Studios saw that everyone could raise a lot of money, as long as audiences felt like they had choices. Since then, superheroes and supervillains, whether light-hearted or darkly-intentioned, have come to a more prominent place in popular culture. That's not a bad thing, of course! Yet we still must deal with the nagging question of how filmmakers can break out of the pack and make movies that informed moviegoers want to see.

One of the greatest movies of all time, *THE GODFATHER: PART II*, is both prequel and sequel, but it's masterfully told and sheds all kinds of new light on the basic dilemmas of the original. Have we seen that in genre movies today? Having just seen *MAD MAX: FURY ROAD* at the time of writing, I must say yes: this is the movie we've been looking for. It's a masterfully



The air itself is filled with monsters:

Mary Shelley & The Bride of Frankenstein

by Alexandra West

Mary Wollstonecraft was member of the intellectual elite and both published writing. Wollstonecraft is noted as one of the foremost figures in the women's rights movement of her era. Her book, *A VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN* was published in 1792 and clearly argues the problems facing women of that time, in particular a lack of access to education which prohibited them from using to the same tools as men. William Godwin was also heavily politically active and influential, publishing his own treatises on establishing rights for all members of society as well as publishing novels such as *THINGS AS THEY ARE*.

Mary Shelley was born in London, England on August 30, 1797 and Mary Wollstonecraft passed away due to an infection sustained during. Mary's birth eleven days later, Shelley's young life was spent in the care of her father along with an older and younger half sister. By all accounts she was studious

and serious. All this world change when in 1812 when she met the man who would be her husband, poet Percy Bysshe Shelley.

On April 10 and 11, 1815, Mount Tambora, the volcano on the Indonesian island of Sumbawa, began to rumble and eventually erupted, causing devastation on the island and spewing vast amounts of gas and sulfur into the air. As the ash shot into the stratosphere, winds held it in and earned it, creating a grim, rainy, and cold summer in 1816 which became known as *The Year Without Summer*. During this time Shelley and her husband were traveling across Europe. Shelley had become pregnant and lost her child, and Percy Shelley's health had worsened. Having already decided to journey to Geneva in hopes that the good weather weather would help all of them, they were again met with rain and howling winds.

The abysmal weather held them captive in their villa but gave them the atmosphere and

At the age of 18, Mary Shelley wrote one of the most iconic and terrifying horror stories of all time. Under the guise of a friendly challenge amongst her husband and friends the young Shelley took on a story of madness, corruption, and creation which would go on to create one of the most enduring figures in horror culture: Frankenstein's monster.

Shelley was practically born into tragedy. Her parents, William Godwin and



poem to tell ghost stories. While there are differing accounts of how the competition of terrifying tales came to be, may take the 1811 edition of *FRANKENSTEIN* as the closest to the truth. In the introduction written by Shelley, she explains the conversation amongst the writers and their friends turned to German ghost stories and it was Lord Byron who suggested that they all come up with new and original terrifying tales to scare each other with.

While everyone else began coming up with their stories, Shelley struggled. She could not find the words to express a horror that would make sense in the world around her. Finally, she had what she called a "walking dream" where she was visited by the specters of Frankenstein and his monster, then she began to write. Having sketched out much of the story in Geneva, her husband encouraged her to keep writing.

The novel *FRANKENSTEIN, OR THE MODERN PROMETHEUS* was published in 1818 to mixed reviews. It uses an epistolary format (a story

told from multiple points of view and sources) to explore the story of Victor Frankenstein, a young scientist who becomes obsessed with bringing death. Utilizing emerging trends in science, Shelley parroted them into her novel and had Frankenstein create a monster which proceeds to destroy everything he loves. The novel has been hailed by many and remains a modern triumph.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, a new medium emerged as the popular form of entertainment: films. By the 1930s, Universal Pictures already had several surprising hits on its hands with film versions of literary horrors such as *DRACULA* (1931) and *FRANKENSTEIN* (1931). While looking at other properties to develop into films, the director of *Frankenstein*, James Whale, returned to Shelley's material to develop a sequel. While the original film utilized many of the themes and ideas, it skewed much of the story and plot in the sequel *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935). While

involved some of the ideas that had been introduced in the first film, namely the monster demanding a mate.

BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN is widely considered to be a sequel that surpasses the original. From style and filmic elements to the empathy and tension that an audience feels, *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* is still one of the most iconic and influential horror films ever made. In his film, Whale added a prologue featuring Mary Shelley surrounded by her husband Percy Shelley and their friend Lord Byron. They are lamenting that her role of *Frankenstein* ended too soon and they wish for more. They also express their disbelief that a woman as delicate and dainty as she could write something such as that. In the film, Shelley merely laughs at them and tells the men to take a seat because, indeed, there is more to the story.

The film begins with the monster surviving the fire in the windmill which was supposed to have killed him in the first film. He flees to the countryside, where he discovers friendship but ultimately learns that he is alone. Meanwhile Dr.

Frankenstein (now named Henry) who is still in love with his wife Elizabeth, encounters the truly mad Dr. Pretorius who wants to make more monsters. This leads Pretorius and the monster to kidnap Elizabeth to make Frankenstein create a female monster. Frankenstein does this, and when the Bride awakens, she screams and hisses at her betrayer, which makes the monster realize that he is truly alone—causing him to kill himself. The Bride and Pretorius watch Frankenstein and Elizabeth escape.

For those with a keen eye, it's notable that actress Elsa Lanchester plays both Mary Shelley in the prologue and the Bride, who only appears in the final moments of the film (and remains uncredited). Director Whale insisted that the same actress play Shelley and the Bride. He felt it was important to emphasize Shelley's femininity, which is shown in the film by her delicate dress and the fact that she is sitting down absorbed in her needlepoint while coyly giggling at her male companions alongside her. She is come up with a truly horrific and disturbing



OPPOSITE: Elsa Lanchester as Mary Shelley—an inspired decision to depict the author, and feature her so prominently, in her own story. ABOVE: The Monster is what would be a fleeting moment of happiness as he tries to find his humanity and experience true content with another living being.

story. The character of Shelley begins the movie, and it is the Bride's screams that end the film. While meant to create the sense that the two were the same person,

In the film, the character of the Bride was meant to serve as a stabilizing force, giving the monster companionship. The male characters fret, worry, and perform acts that turn them into anomalies in the attempt to create a female companion. Feminist scholar Elizabeth Young wrote that Shelley's opening words in the prologue are "Telling the story that gives voice to the bride's screams." For all the attempts to stabilize and normalize Frankenstein's monster by giving him a mate, the Bride swiftly and brutally rejects him, causing their whole world to fall apart. This creates a wonderfully subversive film in which the attempt to normalize is crushed.

While Elizabeth and Henry escape in hopes of returning to a normal world, the

new world of gods and monsters has ended. From the 1970s to 80s, films made by major film companies had to fall within the Motion Picture Production Code (or Hayes code) guidelines which hoped to reinforce its own moral compass of heteronormativity. By allowing the character of Mary Shelley to flaws the story and end it as the final character of the Bride, Shelley continues to control the story. She rejects her role of being pretty, dainty, and available to men in both roles, establishing both characters as powerful, honest, and independent—all traits that could be said of the real Mary Shelley as well.

Mary Shelley, wife of both Percy Shelley and Lord Byron. She passed away in 1851 at the age of 59 from what was believed to be a brain tumor. *The Athenaeum* published the following obituary:

After having some years disappeared from the world of literary occupation,

the daughter of Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, the relic of the poet "Adonis" died the other day—Her first work—written during her residence abroad, and the only one, we believe, referable to the period of her married life—was *Frankenstein*, which scared and startled the world by its premonitory power, promising further surprise of a wild originality unknown in English fiction. All of Mrs. Shelley's writings have a singular elegance of tone, but all of them a pernicious melancholy. Her tales of the world we live in are mixed in their effects of sadness. Hence, and of her works of ingenuity are naturally neglected—whether, however, such neglect should be reversed on a future day or not her "Frankenstein" will always keep for her a particular place among the gifted women of England.

Tainted Love

The TWISTED & the DYSFUNCTIONAL

by Chad L. White



It's not often that a sequel catches its predecessor in terms of superiority. Often the vision of the filmmakers involved is blocked by dollar signs, destroying the dignity of the first film even before its offspring hits the screen.

Such is not the case with *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. Borschtch, the film resonated with audiences more than the original *FRANKENSTEIN*. Perhaps it was Karloff's makeup-laden free being given abundantly more screen time than go-around. Or maybe—just maybe—

even the darkest of us long for love, and find satisfaction in watching others obtain it; in particular those misunderstood monstrosities that were dealt a less-than-satisfactory existence.

We all wanted to see Frankenstein's monster find joy in companionship, especially from one who shared his same shameful composition—from the bodies of the dead. Unfortunately, his bride didn't go for the whole bolts-in-the-neck thing and shrieked in fear at the sight of his just like the rest (well, except for the blind man who

got him hooked on drinking).

However, Dr. Frankenstein's creation isn't the only monstrosity that held onto the hope of something meaningful and intimate no matter how dysfunctional. Whether twisted by the end or skewed from day one, horror cinema has brought us a handful of love stories we've watched again before us.

Scientist Seth Brundle, from Cronenberg's *THE FLY*, held the same obsession with science as that of Dr. Frankenstein. Not even death could stand in his way, though even while looking much like a human creation, Brundle's desire for intimacy and companionship never completely dissipated. He still longed for, and pursued, his love interest, Venetia Quaife. And much like Frankenstein's monster, was rejected. Perhaps it wasn't the jaw-breaking, forced transformation into a fly that killed him, but a broken heart... Okay, no. It was the other stuff. The meatloaf stuff.

But science isn't needed to cloud your vision enough to think your silly butt is going to be huggin' on some sweet thing. Case in point: Freddy from *RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD*. Freddy wasn't after his girlfriend Tina for her body (you see where I'm going with this, right?), but for her brains. A love that would never work, or Freddy succumbed to the toxic chemicals that would ultimately both kill him and raise him from the dead without an insatiable appetite for brains. If the relationship continued,

Freddy would eventually get the goods, and then what's left? That's right. Her body, and no guy only wants... never mind.

Hey, girls are gushy too. It wasn't always the guy after the girl. Sometimes the male role played the disgusted victim to whatever intentions their monstrous better half had for them, while the female was left humiliated... or beheaded. Such is the case with Ash from *EVIL DEAD* and—as though he never learned his lesson—goate in *EVIL DEAD II* (talk about co-dependency). We've all been through head games at some point in a relationship. But nothing quite compares to the decapitation Ash inflicts upon his girlfriend Linda, as he rids the cabin of her demonically bipolar self by making it absolutely clear he no longer digs their deteriorating relationship, and so removes her head with a shovel.

While Frankenstein's monster was clearly misunderstood, with his hide boing no real reason to fear him, Helena from *BOXING HELENA* had every reason to be concerned while obsessed surgeon Dr. Nick Carraway pursued her affection—quite possibly the most twisted one-sided relationship of them all. The surgeon's obsession with a woman he once had a fling with leads him unable to cope with the loss, and he finds the opportunity to hold her hostage in his mancave after she is hit by a car outside his house. Over the course of the film, he surgically removes her extremities in an effort to keep her there and dependent on him. Yikes.

Even the young ones have their place in dysfunctional love in the film world, as potential couple Oskar and Eli from *LET THE RIGHT ONE IN* cling to each other

as outcasts for two completely different reasons: one is a timid and helpless bullied pre-teen boy, and the other a gaudier vampire of the same age, posing as each other's sanctuary from a world that hates them. Fortunately, though Eli may not be exactly as he/she seems, the team end on a good note as they ride off into the sunset via train, knowing they love each other. Yes, there was a trail of blood, but we were rooting for them the whole way.

Okay, so maybe some of these examples seek of more blood and gore than that of Frankenstein's monster's love-lose dilemmas. The point is that love is a driving force for monsters. It contains such power that some would stop at nothing for it, which can be a dangerous thing in the selfless hands of the frighteningly unstable.

Even the almighty Kong felt the impact of its power as he lay broken on the streets of New York. Perhaps it was beauty that killed the beast.



OPPOSITE: *LET THE RIGHT ONE IN*'s young couple headed by tragedy.
ABOVE: Jeff Goldblum with a face not even a mother could love in *THE FLY*. Jennifer Lynch's brilliant *BOXING HELENA* showed love should sometimes mean having to say your sorry.



TIME ENOUGH AT LAST

BEST-SELLING AUTHOR WESLEY CHU DISCUSSES HIS LATEST SCI-FI OPUS, TIME SALVAGER

BY ED BLAIR

Wesley Chu is a friend of *Famous Monsters*’s deeply. We’ve known each other coming up on two decades. I point this out because two years ago, when I first introduced him to *Famous Monsters*, I was making you to take it solely on my word that he was a future literary star. But two years later, things are quite different.

Four best-selling books, with contracts for more. Multiple awards. A nomination for the Campbell Award, which is the Hugo Award for best new Sci-Fi author. And an upcoming U.S. tour. It’s safe to say Wesley Chu has become one of Sci-Fi’s breakout stars. And that year he’s the odds-on favorite to win the Campbell (you can catch my short now).

But whatever your image might be of the stereotypical nerd author, Wesley Chu isn’t it. He can fight. He’s got a beard. He climbs mountains on other continents. And he has appetites for fine cuisine. He’s basically the Ernest Hemingway of Science Fiction (minus the alcoholism). I finally got back to set still long enough to catch up on his journeys and his latest epic, *TIME SALVAGER*.

Famous Monsters. Two years ago when we sat down, you were just getting ready to release your first book, *THE LIVES OF TAO*, through Angry Robot Books. Once that released, your entire life kind of started moving at warp speed.

Wesley Chu. Since it came out in 2013, I’ve completed the trilogy for the TAO series. *THE DEATHS OF TAO* came out in December 2013, and *THE REBIRTHS OF TAO* came out in April of 2015—just a few months ago. My new series, *TIME SALVAGER*, just came out July 7th and has a sequel coming out May of 2016. And those are published through Tor Books. I’m also under contract for a new trilogy based on the TAO universe, with the first book coming out Fall of 2016, titled *THE LIVES OF IO*. And in the middle of all of that, I finished *Kilnsmarco*.

FM. How does the IO series connect to the TAO series aside from taking place

in the same universe?

WC. *IO* takes is set about ten years after *REBIRTHS*. It’ll have a completely new protagonist. It’ll follow a completely new alien, a Quinting named IO. Some of the old TAO characters might cross over only as minor characters. But I’m writing the new books so they can be read completely as a standalone.

FM. Now what about *TIME SALVAGER*? Your new series has some really big concepts wrapped around a very emotional and personal core.

WC. In the 26th century, humanity has colonized the solar system to prevent from going extinct. They rely on these time salvagers to go back in time to what they call Dead End timelines, moments before disaster strikes. These salvagers jump in looking for resources or technology, grab everything they can, and jump out. The disaster happens and covers their

tracks. The problem with the job is that the salvagers experience the last terrible moments of all their victims and can’t do anything about it. It gives them PTSD. The story follows a salvager—called a “chronon”—named James, who’s a lifeless year victim suffering from alcoholism and suicidal thoughts. During a very important job he has a moment of weakness and pulls back one of the victims with him, which is against the law. Now he’s hunted by the authorities he used to work for.

FM. That’s a story with a lot of depth to it. Sure, we’ve seen time travel in other Sci-Fi stories, but its usage here and the characters have a very unique, tragic feel to them. Where did *TIME SALVAGER* originate?

WC. I read an article about a South African photojournalist named Kevin Carter. He took a very iconic photo of the Sudan crisis, where there’s this child crawling towards an aid station, and a

vulture hopping along behind her waiting for her to die. At the time, instead of helping the child, Kevin Carter said that he was a photojournalist and it wasn't his job to get involved. So he took the picture and left. He won the Pulitzer for that picture. But he was so traumatized by the experience he committed suicide three months after he won.

And then one night, a week later, I had a dream I was on the Titanic trying to steal the Hope Diamond. I was from the future and I knew that these people were going to die. I spent several days getting to know people as I was searching for the diamond. And then, as the ship was sinking, I found the diamond and jumped out of that timeline. Right when I woke up I thought that was the best use of time travel—to grab things right before a disaster happens so you don't change the timeline. I wrote some notes down, sent the idea to my manager, and then wrote *TIME SALVAGER*.

FM: Now you're four books deep with more on the way. Is it easier? Harder? What's your creative process like now?

WC: I went full-time writing January of 2014. When I wrote the first TAO book I wrote it over the course of three years. I took my time. I went to cafés. I was one of those dudes that sat in a corner for six hours and abused that bottomless cup of coffee policy. These days, now that it's my job, I sit in my library for twelve-to-sixteen hours on end and just write. The thing about writing that's funny is, with most professors, you get better and more confident as you go along. You understand the tools. With writing, with each book, it feels like the hardest book I've ever written. I've turned in five books now, and with each one it really feels like the hardest thing I've ever done.

FM: What about at the end of the process? Can you enjoy your work or are you going back and wanting to endlessly revise everything?

WC: You gotta realize, by the time a book comes out, that book is two to three years in the past. Because of that, I can't read my own books. I like to think that I'm a better writer now than I was two years ago. I can't read *LIVES OF TAO*. The few times that I have I see all these mistakes or wrong choices. I really am my own worst critic.

FM: That must make live readings a bit unnerving for you.

WC: That's the thing. When I'm on tour I do about a half an hour worth of reading at each event. But here's what I do: I don't read the book word-for-word. I lift an entire section from the book and re-write it so that it works for a live reading.

FM: I imagine part of that comes from your acting background, understanding the difference between the written word that stays on the page as opposed to the written word intended to be shared with an audience.

WC: Exactly. A lot of authors make the mistake of reading right off of the manuscript. The poetry is going to be different. Certain dialogue works on the page but won't translate in a live reading.

FM: Now that we're all about to plunge headfirst into the world of *TIME SALVAGER*,

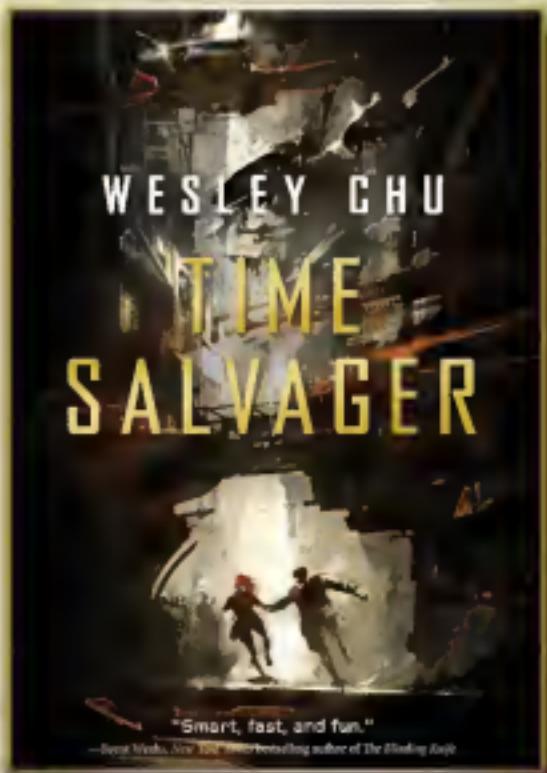
how deep is that time hole going to go?

WC: Originally I planned for two books. And then I realized about six months ago when I was halfway through the second book, the scope is too big for me to do it in two books. It would have to be a trilogy...at least.

FM: Sounds very *GAME OF THRONES*, where George R.R. Martin is telling us it's a trilogy. No, it's four books. No, six...no, seven?

WC: Hey, I'm trying to save the world, man! It takes a lot of work to save the world!

To see *Wes in a hot tub full of Marimba*, as well as catch up with all his adventures, head on over to www.wesleychu.com. The TAO series and *TIME SALVAGER* available at major online and brick & mortar book retailers.





GREAT WHITE HOUSE DOWN: SHARKNADO 3

A CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTOR ANTHONY C. FERRANTE

by Jesse Holland

Ladies and gentlemen, the chondrichthyes have just declared war on America. That means the White House—already rebuilt countless times after being destroyed by General Zod, the airborne squads from *INDEPENDENCE DAY*, and of course, the tidal wave from 2012—will now face its greatest threat to date: *SHARKNADO 3*.

The good news is that this is a war the whole family can enjoy! That's according to *SHARKNADO 3: OH HELL NO* director Anthony C. Ferrante, who describes his latest amalgamation of sharks and tornadoes—which premieres on the SyFy channel on July 23, 2015 at 9 p.m. ET—as a wholesome, kid-friendly superhero movie.

Since the forces of nature and the gnashing teeth that come with it plan to wreak havoc across the entire Eastern seaboard (having already taken a bite out of The Big Apple its last time out), but don't you fret, because the good ol' U.S. of A. has a secret weapon this time around... and his name is David Hasselhoff. Forget the boat. We're gonna need a bigger everything.

Famous Monsters: Sharks... tornadoes... what the heck?

Anthony C. Ferrante: My writing partner Jacob Hair and I have written a couple of things together, and we're coming up with silly ideas and that was when the *SHARKNADO* idea was formed. "What about *SHARKNADO*? That's great!" We kind of fell in love with the title. I think we pitched it like twice and there was no traction, and we kept talking about it but nothing happened. When I was writing the leprechaun script for SyFy, which was called *RED CLOVER*, I put a reference to *SHARKNADO* in the leprechaun movie—something to the effect of, they were trying to hide the fact that the leprechaun was in town and they had something like, "We don't want to have that happen in that town again." Remember *SHARKNADO*? We'll never live that down." That's when the executives were like, "That's kinda cool,

we've gotta make that movie!"

I'm a huge gay anyways. I do homo films. I wrote a lot of homo films for SyFy. So I'd do a film called *HANSEL & GRETEL* for The Asylum and they mentioned the *SHARKNADO* thing and I'm like, "Of course I'm interested in it," because it kind of originated with them. That's what excited me about it. I'm the least likely person to direct a movie like this. Most of the things I do are dark horror films, and here's a chance to kind of do a CGI spectacle with action. I give them credit for giving me a chance, because I wasn't the go-to guy for this kind of stuff.

FM: Was this your "penny butter meets chocolate" moment? Did it surprise you that a channel famous for *Robo-sherpa* vs. *Super-sherpa* didn't already come up with something along these lines?

ACF: Honestly, it was like "What's the

coolest possible idea?" It was a marriage of two things. They did *SHARKTOPUS*, but that was marrying a shark and an octopus and that was great, and it was silly, but when you're talking a natural disaster with sharks, there's something so ridiculous about that you can't help but smile when you hear the name. That was something both Jacob and I accepted with the title, originally. When you say it, it's just cool.

FM: As you started getting closer to the film's release, were you thinking "people are going to love this" or "I'll probably never work in this town again?"

ACF: A lot of movies that came out that summer were overly dark and serious, and here was something that accepted what it was. There are sharks in a tornado, and we're gonna have fun with it. I never look down on material. I never looked at it like, "Ah, we're doing a stupid movie about

shock in a tornado." I always saw the potential. I always saw what we could do. I love comedy, and this was also a chance to put a little dark humor in all this stuff.

FM: Why are some film fans willing to be more forgiving of a TV movie like *SHARKNADO* as opposed to a big summer blockbuster that tries to take the same approach?

ACE: I think most fans accept the fact that we're having fun with the material and we want the audience to have fun with us. We're saying, "We know this is crazy, but we're just gonna keep talking crazy." A lot of true low-budget movies are either way too campy or way too serious. When they're way too serious and they don't achieve their goal with the action or effects or whatever, it sticks out like a sore thumb. "Oh, they're trying to be a big summer movie and be serious but they can't." If it's really campy, it turns off the whole process. All the actors are hammering it up, and that's also a thing where the audience is like, "Eh! Eh! Eh!" I think we did have that balance where we said the concept's crazy, there's lots of crazy shit, but the actors have to feel like they're in a real movie. That's why they were forgiving of it. They felt that we were in on the joke.

FM: You mention the actors. Ian Ziering once talked about getting the script for the original *SHARKNADO* and half-way through started thinking, "Oh jeez, I don't know. This is a little over the top." Was it challenging to get everybody on board with your vision? I can't imagine you had any trouble for the sequel?

ACE: Number one, let's be honest—no one wanted to be in this movie. They tried to get everybody. They went after everybody. No one wanted to be in a movie called *SHARKNADO*. There was a laundry list of probably 40 to 50 people. There were some really good names. FM: For instance?

ACE: Steve Guttenberg was on the list. We thought he would have been really cool. At one point we were talking with Crispin Glover. They went down the list. You've got the action people, the comedy people. They took a cross section of everybody, and it was a very difficult thing. They decided to send

the script out and call it *DARK SKIES* so that people would at least give it a chance. Once it was sent out as *DARK SKIES*, I think we booked John Heard first, then Tim Reid came on board, and then like...

FM: *DARK SKIES*? Yea.

ACE: It was around the third day of shooting when the actors found out that it might be called *SHARKNADO*. We were in the hardware store; I had the entire cast back there, and I felt like Frankenstein's monster against the villagers with pitchforks and torches. "We heard it's gonna be called *SHARKNADO*! This is gonna be terrible, you have to stop it! We have to call it this, we have to call it that! We can't call it that!"

I told them specifically that movies change titles all the time. We don't know what it'll end up being. I said, "If it's called *SHARKNADO*, it'll be a good thing. Trust me." And of course, it worked out. I'm indebted to everybody who took that leap of faith with me. It could have been like any other movie, where it came out and no one cared.

FM: And now, lo and behold, Steve Guttenberg is starring in *LAWALANTULA*, opposite fire-breathing arachnids.

ACE: The lead in particular, that was

the hardest role to cast. Once we saw Ian wanted to do it, it was like, "Why didn't we go to him in the first place?" When you hear him, he's the only person you'd want to play this role. It's so obvious that it's amazing it wasn't obvious. When he got hired, I told him what we were trying to achieve with this. The actors were important. They weren't just props. We wanted to create a character here. We wanted to make him likable. He was totally on board.

FM: I know the phrase "shut down" gets tossed around rather liberally, but I think we can both agree that *SHARKNADO* completely shut down Twitter, which undoubtedly had a hand in its success. Does a movie like this succeed without social media?

ACE: It can, but the first movie didn't have a \$300 million marketing budget. The only way the movie could succeed beyond the way it did was going grassroots. It was the stuff we did on Facebook, it was the title, it was this groundbreaking on social media. It was the only way, because there was no money to promote it. The first movie was a huge accomplishment in so many different ways, because we were the true underdogs. No one should have known we



existed except the SyFy channel audience, and we got mainstream America, which doesn't make any sense. How does that happen? How does a movie with hate to no marketing push get more attention than something like *THE LONE RANGER*?

FM: Did budget constraints force your hand, creatively speaking, and compel you to start thinking outside the box?

ACK: When you don't have money, you have to go and try different things. We didn't seek this intentionally. We were always going to be live tweeting when SyFy ran the show, but to be honest, I expected to get on there and see a few people saying, "You suck Farnsworth. Go to hell!" Or there'd be like, five people I'd

be talking to the entire time on Twitter. When it blew up, you literally couldn't keep up with the tweets on that first screen. I think it's a huge accomplishment that's not recognized a lot. No one has done that before for a first movie. We basically created a communal movie-going experience on Twitter, where the people watching in the "theater" were all actually at home interacting with the film.

FM: I'm sure at that point you were like, "You cheap, thinking about *SHARKNADO 2*."

ACK: I never thought there'd be a sequel. We joked that in the sequel the tornadoes would pick up the



sharks and send them back in time, and it was a joke, but then they tell me number two is gonna happen and it's gonna be in New York and you just start coming up with crazy ideas and that's what's so fun about it. When these types of movies start falling apart is when you run out of gags. Our language with these movies is, "What kind of movie within a movie are we trying to do?" Not necessarily a parody, but in the second movie, we've did a big alien plane sequence with sharks. In the third movie, we're doing a big *WHITE HOUSE DOWN* thing with sharks. As long as you keep finding new ways of doing different types of things so it's fresh, you can keep making these movies. The thing with a lot of sequels is you keep running out of ideas, so it becomes the same old, same old. How many times can the superheros do that? The movies that survive are the ones that keep finding ways to reinvent things. It's harder too, because you want to top yourself. Not only do you have to be

ambitions in the first movie, you have to be twice as ambitious in the second and then be three times as ambitious in the third. Those are the pressures put on it, so the moment you stop coming up with stuff, you're done.

FM: Are you "done"? You never thought you would have two *SHARKNADO* films and now you have three. Could we be looking at a *FRIDAY THE 13TH*-type of run?

ACK: Here's the thing: Syfy wants these movies to go on forever, and I think they will, but you've got to compartmentalize. There's a way to continue the story beyond three without a shadow of a doubt, as far as I say, what has been the journey in the first one of three? The first trilogy. What's the next? What is Fin's arc? You want to tell a complete story, and the story in all three movies is Fin becoming a better family man. He was this surf bum guy who screwed up his family and was kind of a douche, in a way. He was more interested in celebrity life and being a surf hero and he had his bar and let his family go to shit. All this adds up, and he realized in the first movie that his family is important. We kept that progression, even going into part three.

FM: Probably the one thing everyone is talking about for *SHARKNADO 3* is the addition of David Hasselhoff. Is that something you had in mind for awhile, or was it one of those spur-of-the-moment things?

ACK: We always knew we wanted Hasselhoff. The thing is, what do you do with Hasselhoff? We went back and forth on all the permutations that made sense. At one point, we discussed him being the President of the United States, which would have been cool of fin, but someone said, "What about him playing Fin's dad?" And we thought about it, wanted to make sure the age mix worked, and the more you think about it, there's no other choice. Of course he's Fin's dad.

A lot of stuff Hasselhoff has done the last few years has been playing up his image, parodying the image that he has. What I think is brilliant is in this movie, he's a fully formed character. He's not David Hasselhoff playing Fin's dad, he's Fin's dad, and he's great! When he's on screen, you just smile. He's this crusty old man who's got some issues and it's amazing. It's good. It was a no-brainer. Hasselhoff fully embodied creating this character, and I think you're going to be really surprised at just how well it plays. You won't mind him in the movie.

"Let's go kill some sharks."

-Ian Ziering





Years from now I predict this image will hang on college dorm walls instead of Van Gogh's *STARRY NIGHT*. Love it or hate it, Ian Ziering fighting sharks with chainsaws is an inspired piece of cinema.

FM: Sounds like the sharks are in danger of being upstaged. Creatively speaking, is there a little more leeway with the creation of CGI tornadoes as opposed to the sharks, especially considering the shark's place in cinematic history? Was there pressure to hit the right note without trampling on existing canon?

ACE: We always try to have a little bit of practical shark, just because it enhances visual effects shots, but the visual effects team over at The Asylum, they're pretty impressive with what they can pull off. Eric Smith was our visual effects supervisor for the first two movies, and he's co-supervising this one with Joe Lasson and Glenn Campbell. Basically, we wanted this to be kind of epic. There's a lot that goes into having to build a tornado that also has sharks, a lot of them had to go through, and we always want to make

them bigger and better and it's not easy for these guys in general.

FM: Considering how quickly you've turned these films around, it's pretty impressive what your team has accomplished.

ACE: Just put that in perspective. In two and a half years, by the time *SHARKNADO 3* comes out, we will have made three *Sharknado* movies. They still haven't released *BAEDMAN VS. SUPERMAN*, which they started shooting around the time we were releasing *SHARKNADO 1*. The reason I bring that up is because we shoot the movie in January and release it in June. Each of the movies has anywhere between 400 and 700 visual effects shots that are done in a two month period of time. They beat their asses to make this stuff the best they can within the time they have, and there's stuff in these movies that is just as good as anything in a studio film.

FM: As the director, now that you have a chance to look back on your work, what's missing? More boobs? More blood? I'm sure you and (writer) Thunder Levin could really take *SHARKNADO* over the top on

a pay channel like HBO or Showtime. ACE: I wouldn't change anything in these movies. Any filmmaker would tell you, "One more time, a little more money to build a different piece." One thing I never expected to come out of *SHARKNADO* is this huge festoon of kids who love the film, anywhere between the ages of six and fourteen. My daughter—this is the first movie I've made that she was able to see. It's a movie where people are horribly maimed by sharks. *JAWS* made it where people were afraid to go into the water, but *SHARKNADO* made it sort of okay to go back in the water and laugh at sharks. I think part of the charm of the movie is that it's kind of wholesome in a sugary way. There's this this cut-scrut quality to the movie. Yeah, we rip off some people's limbs and there's blood spouting, but it's still kind of like a superhero movie.

FM: Only less pretentious.

ACE: Robbie Rist, who wrote a lot of the songs for the first two movies and is a good friend of mine, said it's a movie that doesn't know it can't do that. And that's kind of the truth about *SHARKNADO*. It's a movie that doesn't know it can't be what it is.

WAR OF THE GODS





GODZILLA VS CTHULHU

Who Would Win In the Ultimate Battle?

by Kelly Dunn

They are two of the most terrifying monsters to be born in the 20th century. In 1925, as a new era of science dawned in the Western world, author H.P. Lovecraft published a tale unlike any told before: "The Call of Cthulhu." The then god Cthulhu, the "green, sickly spawn of the stars," represented the unknown and unknowable elements of the universe. No-one could destroy Cthulhu or even come close to understanding what he was all about, and at some point, when the stars mysteriously aligned, he would come back to assume his right of rule of omnipotence, subsuming human beings like so many cockroaches.

A few decades later, in 1954, in the aftermath of a devastating second World War, a second creature emerged that would—subsequent to striking in several films—be ready to give the otherworldly Cthulhu a worthy adversary. Born of nuclear mutation and nature's revenge, Godzilla roared on unleashed, now threatening global atomic annihilation.

There may have been fans who

initially realized a fissure between these two forces of mass destruction would happen in only a matter of time, but the clatter for a confrontation really took off when, in 1998, writer C. L. Werner's film fiction masterpiece "Godzilla vs. Cthulhu" surfaced. Truly a story with something for everyone, the finale touched off an atomic firestorm (or cosmic one), depending on your point of view) of debate among devoted horror readers, film fans, gamers, and online chatroom devotees that has continued ever since.

Here at *Horror Monsters*, we can't be content to leave it at that. Nor are we to "live on a placid island of ignorance in the middle of black seas of infinity," as H.P. Lovecraft put it, we want to "find the truth and end this." Whatever it takes! like the resolute characters in the most recent *GODZILLA* film, What would really happen if the two monsters were to go to battle, monster against monster somewhere in the stormy sea?

With that in mind, we've assembled monster mavens from every corner of the globe—from Japan to Germany, from

much more! We've decided to debate the question and help to settle the matter once and for all. Examine the evidence, stalwart readers, and consider who would prevail in this titanic clash of the titans!

KELLY DUNN As moderator of this "Godzilla vs. Cthulhu" point, let me first introduce our distinguished discussion of monster experts!



MAX BORENSTEIN is a screenwriter and storyteller who captures the soul and complexity of richly developed characters in his films. His scope pushes the boundaries while maintaining an authenticity regardless of genre. Borenstein is currently set to release the King Kong origin film *KONG: SKULL ISLAND*, a script he wrote for director Jordan Vogt-Roberts. Unveiled Pictures will release the film, which stars Tom Hiddleston, in November 2016. In the television world, Borenstein will create two new projects for his *GODZILLA* partner at Legendary Pictures

with Steven Spielberg's Amblin Television, the *MINDFLYER REPORT* TV series for Fox based on the 2002 film. Envisioned as a sequel to the movie, the series will be set 10 years after the end of *Precious* in DC. Borenstein wrote the script for the 2014 film version of *GODZILLA*, an epic cinematic reimagining of the iconic franchise. The movie, which stars Bryan Cranston and Aaron Taylor-Johnson and is directed by Gareth Edwards, was released by Warner Bros. and Legendary Pictures in May 2014, and has since grossed over \$475 million worldwide. Additionally, Borenstein is developing two new projects for his *GODZILLA* partner at Legendary Pictures



SEAN BRANNET is a co-founder of the H.P. Lovecraft Historical Society, whose motto is *"Lady For Patsavos"*. ("We thought it would be fun"). Sean directed and co-wrote the indie film *THE WHISPERER IN DARKNESS* (filmed in the constituent vintage-and-modern

Mythoscape technique and nominated for the Gold Hugo and Free Spirit Awards). Sean is also co-producer and screenwriter of the indie silent film *THE CALL OF CTHULHU* also filmed in Mythoscape which has become an official selection of over 10 film festivals worldwide.



NANCY HOLDER is an award-winning, New York Times-bestselling author (*WICKED*). Her most recent novel is *THE RULES*, a young adult thriller. In September 2015, *DEMONS OF THE HELLMOUTH: A GUIDE FOR SLAYERS* (co-written with Rupert Giles) will hit the shelves.



MIKE D. McCARTY has been in the entertainment industry for over 25 years working as an artist at one of the top makeup effects companies in the film business KBN EFX Group Inc. Mike has almost 200 film credits on his resume, as well

as a novel (*WEREWOLF BLOODLINES: GEMINI RISING*) and several short stories under his belt.



HENRIK MOLLER is a Swedish director of more than a hundred short films. His horror feature *FIRE* THE Lovecraft Film Festival in Portland Oregon.



ROBERT ROSADO runs and hosts Entertainment Talk Noses (ETN) YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/user/ETNNoise>. He features movies and television shows and discusses all forms of entertainment, from comic book movies to games to孝子 and more.



HUAN VU is a graduate of Sungkyunkwan University. Huan Vu is a co-founder of genre film production company Spikster, based



12 Ludwigshafen, Germany: Vu created the fan film *DAMNATUS* based on the highly successful sci-fi tabletop game Warhammer 40,000. The film was ultimately taken offline by Games Workshop, the owner of the intellectual property, but not before gaining a considerable fan base. Vu's second indie feature film, *Die Farbe*, based on H.P. Lovecraft's classic sci-fi/humor story 'The Colour Out of Space', was completed in 2010 and won awards at several international genre film festivals, including a nomination for Meilleur d'Argent at the Lundi International Fantastic Film Festival in Sweden. It has since been released via self-distribution and through retailers in Scandinavia and North America—so far, fortunatly, without any copyright disputes.

Kelly Dunn: As you can see, we have some great participants with us today. We're talking about Godzilla and Cthulhu duking it out no holds barred, surrounded by their element, which is the ocean. We want a fair fight here, with each creature behaving as described by its creator. That means Cthulhu will act and display the powers

Lovecraft detailed in his manuscript tale 'The Call of Cthulhu', and Godzilla will be the same deus ex we all know and love from his (or her) many movies. Lovecraft tends to refer to Cthulhu as a he, but when it comes to Godzilla's somewhat nebulous gender, you may use the gender pronoun that is most comfortable for them. So without further ado, let's get started!

Mike: Since you've worked on so many monster movies over the years, I see you as having kind of a neutral point of view when it comes to Godzilla vs. Cthulhu. Why don't you start us off and give us your first impressions of this fight?

Mike D. McCarty: As a longtime makeup artist and writer, I've always been a fan of monsters as well as boxing, so here's how I see it playing out: Cthulhu: 'The Old One', hailing from the sunken city of R'lyeh, vs. Godzilla, 'King of the Monsters', who calls the Pacific Rim his home. About most are sure will never happen due to their contractual obligations with competing pay-per-view services.

Cthulhu has the power of an entire cult

of strange black-clothes-wearing gods who love gaming and reading while Godzilla's fan base has always been a bit more diverse and larger.

Cthulhu is normally favored by Vegas despite an age most can't get a number on. His height and reach advantage are forbidding for most combatants and his strong tentacle clan has been known to envelope opponents' power punches in a seething toothy mess. Godzilla, who has been a knockout artist since 1954 and is known by most as the protector of the earth, has faced many fierce opponents in the past, and each time he comes back stronger in the later rounds with the heart of a true champion of the people. Many times down but never out, Godzilla, the courageous underdog, has always come on as the victor.

KB: Nancy, you've written quite a bit of fiction about monsters—and how to deal with them. What's your gut feeling here?

Nancy Holder: A Great Old One against a dragon. A creature so evil we don't have a word for it, versus a force of nature that ultimately saves Son Francesco—and the world. Who would win *isso o maior*—or make that tentacle against clay?

My horror writer's heart tells me that Cthulhu is more powerful. He is a color out of space, a lunatic of the dark, but my soul deep down believes in the power of Godzilla. For ultimately, he acts as a force for good, and my credo is, even in the darkest place, there is hope. Godzilla proves that. No number of Cthulhu pitholes will ever fool me that the Dreamer will bring hope.

KB: Sean, as a founder of the H.P. Lovecraft Historical Society, you have some pretty strong feelings when it comes to Cthulhu. Tell us what makes the Great Old One a strong opponent of Godzilla.

Sean Branney: It seems silly to even need to address this question. Cthulhu wins, totally and utterly. It's such a fundamentally loathed and untrue fight that I feel sorry for Godzilla. In a brief analysis, Godzilla is a terrestrial creature, born perhaps out of radioactive mutation, armed with some kind of dragon breath and a small degree of natural thought. But for all practical purposes, he's a very large dinosaur, smarter than most, who can breathe fire.

Cthulhu, on the other hand, is an ancient alien being shaped and molded by forces completely beyond human understanding. At first glance, the casual observer (after having



been driven mad just by having observed it might think, 'Oh, it is a large quasi-anthropomorphic being suited for combat against another giant creature like Godzilla.' But Cthulhu does not even need to rise from its aqueous slumber in the sunken city of R'lyeh to endue mankind or any other puny life form whose evolution was shaped only during the brief existence of earth.

Cthulhu exists on a cosmic timescale outside our comprehension. Cthulhu is not made of earthly matter, and no amount of physical power can destroy it—including fire-breathing dinosaurs. Cthulhu can assault the psyches of its enemies through

dreams and making thoughts like crushing the very mind and will of any so foolhardy as to engage with Great Cthulhu.

KD: I see you've got something to add, Huan. Has your experience adapting Lovecraftian stories for films like *DIE FARBE* given you some insight as to how Cthulhu would fare in this fight?

Huan Wu: I'm not sure who would triumph in a direct physical duel, but there is a definite answer when, let's say, it comes to a tap battle! Godzilla is very vocal, but kinda monosyllabic if we're honest, whereas Cthulhu, or a Great Old One, can bring such an exceptionally large vocabulary with so many difficult pronunciations to the table—no chance to strike for Godzilla!

KD: Good point, Huan. But on the subject of physical combat, Rob, you actually created a fantasy battle simulation for *Godzilla vs. Cthulhu* in which you listed each monster's powers according to

four categories—including long-range mid-range, and short-range capabilities, as well as strike effectiveness. In your battle simulation, you said that Godzilla's atomic fire breath is its greatest weapon. And you add that although Cthulhu has the "eye and the scale of a kouga" and also "the powers of a magician", you don't take his talent for mind control into account in this fight—is that right? So based on each creature's carefully catalogued powers, you seem to think, *Godzilla* has the advantage over *Cthulhu*.

Robert Rodriguez: The problem with most *Cthulhu* fans is that they think he has all these powers that he actually doesn't. Most of these powers come from *Dungeons & Dragons* books, which are not considered canon to Lovecraft's work. In fact, Wizards of the Coast had to remove *Cthulhu* from its best-selling books due to copyrights.

SB: *Dungeons & Dragons* books are not the best place to learn about *Cthulhu*. KD: But what about Cthulhu's powers of mind control, Rob? You don't see those as a problem for *Godzilla*?

RR: In Lovecraft's "The Call of Cthulhu", the author explains that *Cthulhu* has

control over the minds of creative and insane people. Also, any man that can see Cthulhu does indeed go crazy. However, Godzilla is no man, so Cthulhu would have no power over him.

SB: Now, that's just being silly. Cthulhu's ability to psychically read has nothing to do with human beings. Cthulhu's ability to shape dreams and influence the psychology of his victims extends to all manner of creatures, plant and life forms as yet unknown to humanity.

MBM: The breath weapon of the King of the Monsters is devastating if he's given the chance to use it, but the mental weapon of insanity from the Old One can far outweigh the damage done by the atomic breath of the giant lizard.

RR: From a philosopher's point of view, it's also a clear victory for Cthulhu, despite some

scathing complaints about Team Lovecraft playing dirty mind tricks! Godzilla, created by a nuclear bomb, started as a symbol for humanity's self-destruction and then gradually became a friend and protector. Now that's a nice story for any shrink, but even if we see Godzilla as our unleashed Mother Earth dwarfing us humans, putting us in perspective, reminding us that we are nothing but ants—his nothing compared to Cthulhu's otherworldliness. He just don't care. He sleeps. He wakes up. He destroys everything. That's it. It's a simple idea that we're all that insignificant, that it stops to matter how self-destructive we are, but you can't beat that.

KB: Max Borenstein, I'd like to hear your thoughts on this. Since you wrote the screenplay for the fantastically successful

2014 GODZILLA and you've got another highly anticipated GODZILLA movie on the way, you are certainly an expert when it comes to this creature's psychology. Could Godzilla possibly withstand the mind-bending call of Cthulhu?

MB: Borenstein: Okay, so this is easy. Cthulhu drives all who gaze on him insane. Godzilla is an earth-shattering badass who can broil atomic fire. Destroying Godzilla seems might result in the leveling of an entire continent, but it won't do Cthulhu any favors. KB: Hrmnn—It sounds like the Great Old One might be in some trouble here. That's a little surprising to me because on a cosmic scale, Cthulhu seems so much larger than Godzilla to begin with.

RR: Sure can be a factor and Cthulhu is much bigger but we have seen Godzilla handle larger creatures like Orga and Biollante. In fact, in Kôdôrî's manga series GODZILLA, KING OF MONSTERS, Godziller lifted and threw Neo Biollante, who was nearly twice Godzilla's size and rooted to the ground.

KB: Godzilla does have a history of beating the odds, which really endears this creature to us fans. Now, if I understand you've spent quite a bit of time in Japan. What would be your perspective when you're standing in the country where Godzilla came to be?

RR: I used to live in Japan, where benevolent dragons course the sky and kites answer the summons of tiny singing pixies. Japan literally rose from the ashes to become a world power while retaining the beauty and grace of its ancient beginnings. When I lived in Japan, we used to sit up on a hill on our tiny base of Yokosuka to watch the demonstrations that occurred in the city below whenever a nuclear submarine pulled into port. We were told that these demonstrations were organized by the Communist party and that the demonstrators were paid. (Lunch was included!) But one day in Kyoto, my stepfather, my sis, and I had to wade through a demonstration to get onto a streetcar and on the faces of the people who parted so that we could get through. I read the frustration and fear that the nuclear nightmare was not yet over for Japan.

What of Fukushima, I wonder now, so many years later? If only some daisaku would have devoured all that radiation.

KB: Speaking of radiation. Henrik, I know your recent film FEED THE LIGHT has



been called "a modern Lovecraftian tale of the vast unknown" as well as "a psychedelic nightmare" but that's no reason to look so depressed. What's your take on all this? Will Godzilla be the hero once again when going up against Cthulhu?

Henrik Møller: I think of this battle as the duel of the green giants. I have been a huge fan of Godzilla since I was around four years old, so it is with great sadness I have to say that if Godzilla ever were unlucky enough to encounter Great Cthulhu rising out of the Pacific, she would meet a most gruesome death.

The Great Old One is a god from the stars with magical powers, and is probably accompanied by an army of nasty sea monsters from R'lyeh. In Lovecraft's story, Cthulhu's head is crushed by a ship, but immediately begins reforming, which clearly indicates it is immortal, so being blasted with kaiju breath would only be a minor irritation. KD: Yes, that's an unforggetably creepy scene in 'The Call of Cthulhu' where, in an act of desperation, the brave Norwegian sailor Johansen sails his sailing vessel straight into Cthulhu, but what happens next defies human logic.

SIL: If you read the Lovecraft, you will note that Cthulhu does get run over by a boat, at which time it devolves into a noxious vapor. As soon as the boat passes, Cthulhu reconstitutes itself, apparently unaffected by the encounter.

RR: Many people joke that Cthulhu got undone by a boat. But it did not; it got run over and reformed. It's the fact that Cthulhu even allowed itself to get run over that shows the difference between it and Godzilla. Godzilla could not go through a yacht. Godzilla can destroy multiple battleships at a time. I am sorry—I just can't see how anyone can justify Godzilla ever losing to a monster that we have only heard "tales" of its power, which are not very overwhelming to begin with.

If we have one thing to go by, it's battles Godzilla has been battle tested against all monsters. Cthulhu took a shot to the head by a yacht and is too big for Adri to be effective. Cthulhu has no experience and is not battle tested.

SIL: One does not become "battle tested" by stomping around Tokyo fighting with Møller or his ilk. Cthulhu's battles have been with entities the size of galaxies, spanning millions of years in conflicts that humans cannot be grasped by human cognition. I think it is prudent that my colleague limits his thinking to battles that



involve tanks, artillery, and fire breathing. Were he to truly be confronted by the scope of Cthulhu's consciousness, he would surely be driven mad by the revelation.

KD: I wish we could keep going for as many more as these monsters have, but sadly, it's time to sink this debate back into the ocean from whence it surfaced. Final answer as to who ultimately wins—Godzilla or Cthulhu?

MDM: If I were a betting man, and I am, I would say strong money goes to Cthulhu for an early-round surprise knockout. If Godzilla can hold on in the early rounds and take the fight the distance, then I'm sure the biased judges would give him the decision.

HJM: My bet is that Godzilla would be slain fairly quickly by Cthulhu's deadly spells, rather than by its claws and tentacles.

RR: Godzilla would get rid of Cthulhu like a fan in the wind! Nothing can stand in Cthulhu's favor to say otherwise.

HV: You think Team Lovecraft is unfairly winning any philosophical debate by devolving and nullifying human logic and emotion? Well, then pray for Godzilla finding R'lyeh soon and taking it out physically while this son-of-a-Yog-Sothoth is trapped and helpless, dreaming of things that cannot be described.

NIL: If only Godzilla mighty proud, and strong, would take on Cthulhu. I'm sure he

would save us again.

SIL: Bow down, Godzilla, and pray Cthulhu may swiftly rip you limb from limb with its mighty tentacles, for should you be spared that fate, then Cthulhu may exercise its will against you until with despair and madness being the kindest of all fates—which Cthulhu may bestow unto you. Is Cthulhu strong?

MB: Cthulhu is a monster. Godzilla is King of the Monsters. It's in the name. So basically, eat blue-bream, Great Old One! With all due respect and admiration, naturally.

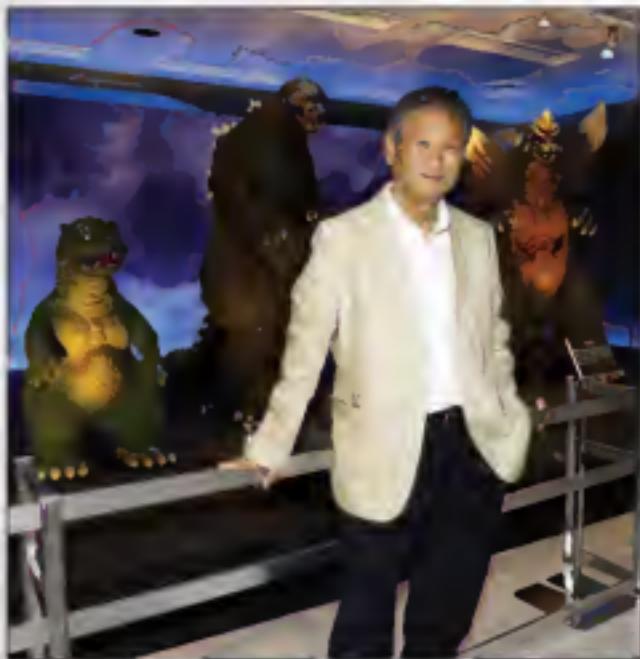
There you have it, folks. Our experts have spoken. In the battle of Godzilla vs. Cthulhu—it's a draw! Panelists Sean Branney, Henrik Møller, and Huan Vu see Cthulhu's insatiable alien power as the force that will take down Godzilla—and, shortly thereafter, the rest of us. Another three panelists—Mike Berentzen, Nancy Holder, and Robert Rosato, still hold out hope that humanity will be saved by the only daikaiju in existence who can stop and/or charizard Cthulhu into submission. For them, Godzilla emerges victorious—by the skin of his armored hide. And our rogue panelist, Mike D. McCarty, a remaining neutral until he sees which monster can go the distance in this fight. For the moment, each creature must dive down beneath the waves waiting to fight another day.

KOICHI KAWAKITA



BY EDWARD L. WILLARD

KEEPER OF THE GODZILLA FLAME FOREVER ROARS ON!



The Studio Special Effects Director Koichi Kawakita was the visionary who kept fans attracted like moths to his blinding visual effects creating that Japanese monster movies—particularly those featuring the anti-hero Godzilla—survived and thrived during the Heisei era. His sudden passing on December 10, 2014 due to liver failure shocked the special effects industry to its core. To the very end, his disease led to the massive GUNBOT THE ARMORED ROBOT (2014) and towering accommodations at the Hotel Giony in Shinjuku, Tokyo with its Godzilla-themed rooms and landmark rooftop, which opened Apr 24, 2015. He helped to transform the King of the Monsters into a wondrously braided with heart and without tameness as deep roots linked to Eiji Tsuburaya. Consequently the day after his death, Toho announced plans to film their own Godzilla film in 2016, due in part to the worldwide success of Warner Bros. Legendary Pictures' 2014 release.

To get his talented hands and feet in the door of the budding industry, Kawakita joined Tsuburaya's team in 1962 on GORATH as a matte artist. From there he performed all jobs possible—fueled by his first love for the genre, THE MYSTERIANS (1957)—including scenes of robot Magmar, played by Haruo Nakajima. Working with the

innovative Toho Studios during the groundbreaking '50s and '60s and later with Tsuburaya Productions. Kawasaki's position at Toho allowed him to branch out with his own company, Dream Planet Japan Co., Ltd., in 2007, which created the live-action series *GRANSAZERS* (2003), *JUSTIRISERS* (2004), and *SUPER FLEET SAZER X* (2005).

Though he did not have the chance to directly collaborate with Tsuburaya in the early years, Kawasaki's signature work accented television heroes, including *ULTRAMAN ACE* (1972), *ZOSE FIGHTER* (1973), *ULTRAMAN TARO* (1973), *MEGALO MAN* (1973), and *ULTRAMAN 80* (1980). In 1976, at the age of 32, he was officer in charge of effects on the war film *SAMURAI OF THE BIG SKY*, which starred Hiroshi Fujoka of *KAMEN RIDER*, fame as the most decorated Japanese Zero fighter pilot in history. Kawasaki's team built an entire air fleet of Zero planes in record time—something he was particularly proud of, as he actually brought a copy of the film to the interview. Spurning no expense on realism, it was heralded by the real ace Saburo Sakai and WWII comrades, who were invited to the set. Eventually, Kawasaki helmed the beatiful anime-style live-action film *GUNSHID* (1989), before calling the shots on *GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE* (1989).

Speaking of Eiji Tsuburaya, Kawasaki actually passed two books on his legacy, and at G-Fest 2014 in Chicago he solemnly spoke of the effect of his death on the industry in 1970. Kawasaki said, "When he died, there was a special effects department at Toho, and when he passed, it all went away. Everyone looked up to that sort of Mr. Tsuburaya, and something big was pulled out of my heart when he died. At the time Tsuburaya died, many were worried about the future of *Godzilla*." A lot of Kawasaki's fans and friends had similar feelings in December last year, but on April 1, 2015, joyous hope for the future keepers of the flame in up-and-comers Hideaki Anno (*MACROSS*, *EVANGELION*) and Shingo Higuchi (*GAMERA, ATTACK ON TITAN*) were announced as the writer and director on Japan's *Godzilla* 2016 summer release by Toho.

Kawasaki was a quiet spoken artisan whose ongoing promotion of the King of Monsters started with his first humble steps onto the sound stages at Toho Studios long ago. He grew up dreaming about working in the industry. Loved it, and continues to inspire



potential keepers of the radioactive flame to follow their hearts and minds by proliferating in the wage of fantastic cinema. Yugi Kada, official Toho *Godzilla* fan, recently commented, "Kawasaki was a director that served in the creation of realistic monsters and motion picture special effects with ideas based on traditional techniques and expression available to him. He also flexibly absorbed the sensibilities of Hollywood's never-bored of effects after *STAR WARS*, and I think his achievements inspired big ideas, bringing a breath of fresh air to Toho sci-fi films."

Kawasaki's finale on earth was a private affair with approximately 600 in attendance at Toho Studios, and included exquisite bouquets of carrots in the form of Mochi honoring *REBIRTH OF MOTHRA* 1 & 2 (1996/1997). Farewell to the rightful heir to *Godzilla's* Kingdom during the *House*

on. Kawasaki-san changed the game face of one of the world's favorite monsters and further etched the beast from the east into our psyche permanently!

The following interview was conducted at the imaginative "Big *Godzilla* Special Effects 60th Anniversary Memorial Evolution" at Sunshine City in Ikebukuro, Tokyo, which attracted thousands of attendees, later traveling to the delight of fans in Osaka during the summer of 2014. With respect, we present what might be Kawasaki's last interview by foreign correspondents.

Famous Monsters. What has been the impression of those attending the *Godzilla* 60th Anniversary event here in Tokyo? **Kaichi Kawasaki.** Many people have come daily to the event and continue to buy tickets, including many foreigners



like yourselves

FM: Many people from America and Europe want to attend this event. We heard that many are saying across the globe, 'I want to go, I want to go there!' The *Hokoku Aiso Tokusatsu* (Special Effects Museum—Craftsmanship of Story and Human Emotion Through Miniatures) exhibition was held not too long ago, but this is the biggest *Godzilla* event in ten years, correct?

KK: We held these events about every ten years or so, and we've held it in this same place before. In America, there are a lot of children who grew up watching *Godzilla*. In Japan, however, it was not available on television. It is a movie thing here in Japan. But now with the *Legendary Godzilla*, there are a lot of kids seeing *Godzilla*. A big age gap has developed between the old fans and the new fans.

FM: Now there are many girls who like *Godzilla* too, and their presence is growing!

KK: Yes there are a lot of women and girls right? There are so many stats and lots of them in this *Legendary Godzilla* event on display in Japan, we have the *Legendary Godzilla* from Hollywood in this exhibit, and we present the Japanese *Godzilla* films in their entirety as well.

FM: This event is very popular as is the new movie.

KK: Like your book (magazine book), there are many books you can see on this tour, including original manuscripts and more. Twenty years ago there were lots of books and magazine covers featuring *Godzilla*. There might have been a bit more then compared to today.

FM: This event is different than others in that the new *Godzilla* is on site with the classic version. What do you think the future holds for *Godzilla* in Japan?

KK: What will it be like? The new *Legendary Godzilla* Part II and Part III. That's good enough, don't you think? I think the *Legendary* movie was good for *Godzilla*'s history.

FM: Mothra, Rodan, and King Ghidorah are all coming back in the new films.

KK: With *Godzilla* in the future, it is a little difficult. The earthquake, tsunami, and the events that we have had make us a little cautious on how to present mass destruction to a Japanese audience. It is still a sensitive subject.

FM: We understand. The world continues to support Japan in its reconstruction

efforts. *Focus on Miniatures* and *MET* generated donations to Fukushima disaster relief efforts.

KK: Ah yes, I know about it.

FM: Japanese *Kaiju* remain popular in America and are in the lime-light a bit more, possibly because of the attention on reconstruction efforts in the Tohoku area. There is also a bit of a new 'Kaiju Boom' going on in the West now.

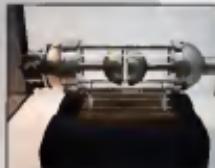
KK: In these days fewer and fewer people come to see *Godzilla* in theaters, and particularly ten years ago at our last event (during *GODZILLA FINAL WARS*, 2004). When I was Special Effects Director on the films, more people were visiting the theaters to see *Godzilla*. During the Millennium phase, unfortunately, the audiences became smaller and smaller.

FM: Maybe screens were larger before because your passion for the *Godzilla* universe was direct from the heart; honest and sincere it is purest form.

KK: It is different not only because of the director and movies, but the boom is different because of the societal atmosphere these days.

FM: What is the atmosphere like now?





FROM TOP: The Oxygen Destroyer from the original *Godzilla* film. Rodan and Gigan 'just hoogle' out. Medagodzilla smiles for the camera.



and how is it different during this event celebrating the 60th Anniversary of *Godzilla*? KK: Now, the costumes, and so many kids are attending with their parents, and they are very happy. Many fathers bring their kids allowing them to share their passion with families and the children get really excited. *Kaiju* culture is not limited, and it is not ever in Japan! Many kids like... me, love *Godzilla*. FM: We did a fan event in Yokohama bringing Hideo Nakajima back to Yokohama on Armed Forces Day. We showed the Legendary movie

in advance of the Japan general release. There were 500 people there. The youngest guest was two months old, and the most senior fan in attendance was sixty years young.

KK: [laughs] Very good!

FM: Is there anything additional you would like to personally add for your fans and readers about Japan *Godzilla* culture?

KK: *Kaiju* eiga is Japanese culture and it is not like American creature or American disaster films. Creature and monster films are available in the United States

Only Japan has the *kaiju* culture! This is important for Japanese people.

FM: We really love *kaiju*, and *Godzilla* as number 1, the "King of *Kaiju*!" Go to any convention these days and check the amount of people visiting *Godzilla* there! KK: [laughs] In the new *Godzilla* movie, the United States comes to Japan to help our country and attacks *Godzilla* on screen.

FM: We wish they had accentuated the presence of Japan Ground Self Defense Forces (JGSDF) forces in the new *Godzilla*

film! There's a brief nod, but that is about it.

KK: Yes, the mechs and using mechs in all of the *Godzilla* films are useful and pure fantasy. However, in the American *Godzilla* film they are using real weapons. Not only real weapons but futuristic weapons are important to all *Godzilla* films.

FM: Many transport the elements in older films like the Oxygen Destroyer, Maser Cannon Tank, Morkaros, Super X, and others. We really enjoy those.

FM: Thank you so much, sir and all the

best with the exhibition here and in Osaka. Thank you very much for your time.

KK: Yes, you are very welcome.

FM: See you again.

Kaijukai-san put together a wonderful exhibit and we have been proud to hear about *Godzilla* running to Japanese theaters in 2016 for the next installment in the legendary series of *kaiju* (not *monster*) movies. Though fans will never have the chance to meet the talented soul again in this

earth, his larger-than-life presence lives on inspiring new *Godzilla* generation to come.

Edward L. Holland has written for *Famous Monsters*, *G-Fan*, *Stars and Stripes*, and *Monster Attack Team (MAT)* as editor and co-founder. At www.kaijukaijifiction.com *Special Shouts*: *Kouchi Kaijukai*, *Stars and Stripes*, *Dream Planet*, and *Norman England*. All images by Edward L. Holland, *Norman England*, David Eric Dalgish TM & © Toho Co. Ltd © Dream Planet Japan Co., Ltd

GODZILLA 60TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION ROAD

BY KYLE YOUNG



Japan has often been a source of inspiration and surprise, and with Godzilla turning 60 last year, there was no better place to visit and celebrate the King of the Monsters' 60th year legacy than an industry insiders exhibit that featured an exhaustive amount of memorabilia called the *Big Godzilla Special Effects 60th Anniversary Memorial Exhibition*. The exhibit was sponsored by Kenichi Kurokawa and his company Dream Planet Japan Co. Ltd. and was on display in Taka no oikebukuro's Soundwave City for just weeks in the beginning of August 2014 before it packed up and traveled to Osaka for another limited engagement.

At the entrance to Ikekubo, we met a pair of adorable Japanese women decked in red and blue Godzilla-themed kigurumi (costumes) welcoming us to the exhibit. An enormous Godzilla tail appearing to have smashed through the wall at the entrance was the first thing to greet attendees while the Godzilla junior suit from *GODZILLA VS. KING GHIDORAH* (1991) stood ominous and forth. In just off to the side, the exhibition featured an impressive number of items from all three Japanese eras. The original *Open Sesame* atropos seen in San Diego at the *Godzilla Encounter* in 2013 was more impressive this time around, displayed next to the *Seraphim's* divine helmet and books from the final film. Gigantic suit-vestibule made from the 1970s and many other e-popping props were on display, including the larger than expected hunkster from *GODZILLA VS. MOTHRA, KING GHIDORAH: GIANT MONSTERS ALL-OUT ATTACK* (2001). The suits of yesteryear have long since deteriorated, but the armatures stand tall from the film that reintroduced man to the King of the Monsters. *GODZILLA* (1954) has survived for all generations to follow.

Additional surprises included Heisei-era Toho mecha on display, the majority of which were created while Noriaki Kawakita was the director of Special Effects on Godzilla films from 1989 to 1995—designs generally dismissed by art and model kit manufacturers until recently. Original concept paintings, maquettes, sketchbooks and scripts were there plus the mounting needs. Life-like statue of *Godzuki* (prince) Taro Tsubasa sitting in his director's chair with dark glasses and fedora overcoating for perfecting a special effects scene across the walking path of patrons. Other highlights from this exhibit were displays featuring suits from the Shinjuku stage, from one of his most lambasted films *GODZILLA VS. SPACE GODZILLA*, the king stood with his cohorts Space Godzilla, Little Godzilla and M.O.G.—R.A. (lovingly referred to as attendees). An A-list portion of *GODZILLA: A FINAL WARS* suit-studded roster was on display, complete with Godzilla Queen, Rodan, Behemoth, Anguirus and Monster X. There was even a mini-theater running clips and trailers from the entire series.

Just past the theater, a special photo opportunity was available. For a nominal fee of 1,000 yen, you could have your photo taken with the 2000 Megaguodzilla—on display in his decked-out no less! There was a bonus smaller area of the exhibition dedicated to the new Warner Bros. Hollywood Godzilla from Legendary Pictures and adjacent to that collectibles on display, including items from Japanese toy companies like Bandai and X-Plus. They also displayed the serial production line set models for the *FINAL WARS* Godzilla figures.

Such an amazing trip through Godzilla's history would not be complete without one final stop: a gift shop complete with posters, t-shirts, myo-rite bags, cookies, books, postcards, CDs, DVDs, Blu-ray discs and Godzilla vinyl! As we stepped out into the kaijuous and bitter sun, the one last blessing upon us a parting gift: one of the Godzilla event suits from *A FINAL WARS* came stomping down the walkway, greeting children and adults alike, thanking locals and tourists like us for traveling half the world to celebrate the legendary movie creature.

*Kyle Young is the organizer and head of *Kaijudo*, a website dedicated to Godzilla and the world of Toho kaiju professionals and fans.*

BATTON LASH: LAYING DOWN THE SUPERNATURAL LAW

Lash, Batton

The comic's creator gives his deposition on SUPERNATURAL LAW, the comic book life, and how Famous Monsters lurks at the heart of it all.



BY KELLY DUNN



Comic book creator Butch Lash knows it's not easy being different. But if you happen to be a monster with legal woes, at least you can get a good attorney. For the last 36 years, Lash's comic series *SUPERNATURAL LAW* has given readers fair warning with the slogan, "Beware the Creatures of the Night—They Have Lawyers!"

Operating from their law office at 13 Court Street in Brooklyn, New York, Lash's "Counselors of the Macabre" are Alonso Wolff, a tough-minded beauty and her law partner the blustering yet brittle Jeff Byrd. Assisted by "The World's Greatest Secretary," the savvy and sensible Mavis Monroe, these advocates of the uncanny represent all manner of monsters, mummies, and things that go bump in the night—whether in a crumbling old house, a desolate graveyard, or a modern courtroom.

Just like the hit parade of monsters and re-creations, ripped-from-the-headlines scenarios portrayed in his comic series, Lash is versatile. He writes illustrates publicists, and sells *SUPERNATURAL LAW* himself (www.collectedpress.com). On his breaks from the comic coast beach, his projects have included *ARCHIE MEETS THE PUNISHER*, stories for other Archie and *Simpsons* comics, and his latest project—an all-new seven-part series published by Aces Weekly titled *THE FIRST GENTLEMAN OF THE APOCALYPSE*.

Lash is a person for whom, as he proclaims, "All roads lead to comic." And the road to Lash's signature creation, *SUPERNATURAL LAW*, was paved with multicolored sketchpads, monster movies, and the pages of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine.

The young Butch Lash was a true-blue

Monster Kid who discovered his passion for comics—and scary creatures—at an early age. "I seem to recall just being interested in monsters all the time," he says. The year 1962, when Lash was eight years old, stands out for him as a breakthrough year. "That was the year I discovered monster movies," Lash recalls.

"We would watch *CHILLER THEATRE* on Saturday night. Every week they would show an awful movie that everyone would love." Also on the schedule: *THE MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE*. "That's how you got to see a movie multiple times in the pre-*DVD* days," Lash explains. "They would show the same movie twice a day for a week. My brother and I loved the monster movies so much we would watch the whole thing over and over again. Classic monster films such as *KING KONG* were regular fare, with a good dose of Warner Bros. gangster films such as *THE PUBLIC ENEMY* shown as good measure, all on WOR Channel 9 in New York.

The movies made their mark. To this day, Lash favors creature features over shark-and-gash fare. "Horror to me, means monster movies," he declares.

Even before discovering the magical world of monsters, the baby Bat made drawings on the sketchpads his parents would bring him from the grocery store. "It was a visual reaction," Lash says of his using every spare moment to draw pictures. But he always found some time for excursions to the newsstand at the local candy store to buy comic books with his limited pocket money.

"I read all the comics, with *Superman*, *Batman*, all the pre-superhero Marvel comics," he says. "Back then, Marvel was just publishing monster comics—the *Glob*, *Fin Fang Foom*, things like that. They were great. The monster comics were moody. They had this maddly coloring that gave those monsters an atmosphere."

Looking at the variety of art in each comic, little Lash realized he liked some styles of drawing better than others. "I started to notice different artists drew in different ways," he remembers. The next step for the budding young artist? "Let me try that."

Inspired by diverse styles of comic book art and a steady diet of monster classic reruns, the young Lash created his very own comic. "My first comic that I drew as a kid was called *CHILLER THRILLER*," he chuckles. "Every so often I would draw *Monster Island*, a place where all the monsters lived."

It didn't take Lash long to locate the dark denizens of *Famous Monsters*. On one pilgrimage to the candy store magazine



rack, the artwork Lash beheld issue No. 28 in all its glory. The cover boasted a strange striped background framing a close-up of Bela Lugosi as the Sayer of the Law from *ISLAND OF LOST SOULS*. "I recognized him from *CHILLER THEATRE*," Lash explains. The *Famous Monsters* issue became an instant masterpiece, despite the seemingly exorbitant price of fifty cents. "I read it cover to cover," he says. On a recent visit to his childhood home, Botton located the torn remnants of his first *Famous Monsters*: "I read it to pieces," he says. "But of course I was there for the next issue."

Many, many issues of *Famous Monsters* later, Lash was all grown up and ready for the School of Visual Arts (SVA) in Manhattan. The decision to become an artist and writer came easily after briefly considering a career in law, theater or film. "In theater and film, you depend on other people," he reasons. "In comics, with even just a piece of paper and your imagination, you can do anything." Though two of his SVA teachers tried to discourage his artistic ambitions, Lash never wavered from his decision. His response to his teachers' dislike of his drawing technique? A shrug and the statement, "Over time, you improve."

Despite the criticism of his teachers, art

school provided Lash with the most support of his peers. At SVA, "I met people like me," Lash marvels. "It was like the dam breaking, finding people who spoke my language." On the first day of school, Lash met John Holmstrom, who later founded *Punk* magazine. "We shared an incredible admiration for [comics book astro] Steve Ditko, and we really hit it off. But we must have been tailing our fellow students in 1972. In those days, you never heard people talking about comic books," Lash says.

While brushing up on his drawing skills, Lash took a new view of the scary material he'd always loved. "At that time, horror was big, but comics were down," he remembers. Though a lifelong horror fan, Lash found himself enjoying horror with a humorous take, such as DC Comics' *THE WITCHING HOUR*, more than the "hand-to-the-head-by-an-I-circus-with-these-powers superhero-type thing," as Lash describes it. In the movie theaters, Lash saw graphic horror replacing the classic monster films he loved. "That was around the time horror movies were really going to be horrific," he says.

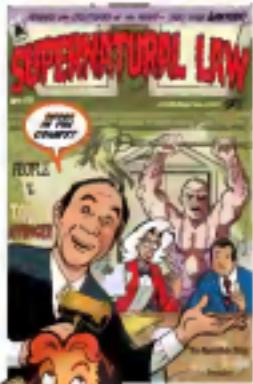
A viewing of *THE EXORCIST* swayed Lash permanently to the direction of humorous horror. "Since I went to Catholic school, I thought *THE EXORCIST* was a really frightening movie," he confides.

"The next year my tastes were more to *YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN*. I was enjoying more of the parodies of monster films and fun stuff."

The fun stuff came in handy when, in 1979, Lash went to work for *The Brooklyn Paper*. "I drew the cartoons, the ads and then one day, boldly, I said, 'Why don't we have a comic strip?' They said yes, and left it to me to figure out what."

Fortunately, the answer lay in wait just up the street. "In that part of town, there were law firms of every conceivable type, a lot of them on Court Street. Most of them had the reputation of being 'ambulance chaser' offices," Lash reveals. "It wasn't a compliment to be called a Court Street lawyer. While I was delivering the paper one day, I thought, wouldn't it be funny if there were these lawyers on Court Street who represented monsters? They would have this dark office at the very end of the hall. I thought, I'll do that until I come up with something I really want to do." Thus, the first incarnation of *SUPERNATURAL LAW*—then called *WOLFY & BYRD, COUNSELORS OF THE MACABRE*—came to life.

Lash had so much fun with his new comic that by the time he got to the third storyline, the "Vampire Dentist," he realized, "This is what I want to do." "The Vampire Dentist" told the tale of a vampire who works as





a dentist, knocking his patients out with anesthetic in order to drink their blood in peace and quiet. Lash based the storyline on a real-life court case, a tradition he continues in his gently sordid, monster-rific way. "I was trying to give the comic a verisimilitude with real courtroom drama," he says.

In working on the comic, Lash puts the law learned from law school to play—and then some. "Everything I remembered from *Famous Monsters* and *THE MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE* and monster comics, I processed through *SUPERNATURAL LAW*," he says. "Wolff & Byrd themselves come out of what I liked in characters: Alanna Wolff as my perfect woman, and there's a lot of me." Jeff Byrd's *SUPERNATURAL LAW* also defies the conventional expectation Lash himself has heard many times—that women don't like comics. "I am proud to say that *SUPERNATURAL LAW* has always enjoyed a large female readership," he says. "It's nice to see."

"Fortunately," Lash continues, "everyone understands monsters. Everyone knows Frankenstein's creature. They know a vampire sucks your blood, a werewolf comes out at the full moon." On the courtroom side of the comic, Lash is also careful to avoid legal angles that might baffle readers. "Someone once told me, 'I shouldn't have to rush to a reference volume to understand what you're trying to say,'" Lash relates. "At the same time, I thought that's where the humor would come from: monsters dealing with the legal system."

As *SUPERNATURAL LAW* took on a life of its own, the *Famous Monsters* influence continued to linger, with issue #11 "With A Silver Bullet" designed as a nod to the "way-out layout" of *Famous Monsters* magazine covers. "A thing that people rarely talk about is the design of it and the typeface, which I love," Lash observes. "Something about it is very appealing. It's a unique approach to design. Lash also admired the "Wanted! More Readers Like" section for senior citizens—a feature he adopted for his own book-of-the-month fan letter space.

It was only a matter of time before Forme himself appeared in the law offices at 13 Court Street. "Forme," as he is known in *SUPERNATURAL LAW*, first appeared in issue #40 and has a recurring guest spot as a world-wary night watchman, keeping an eye on the comings and goings of the unpredictable horrors who frequent the Wolff & Byrd law offices. Adjusting his trademark glasses, "Forme" can only shake his head at the legally-challenged manner in which—whether in astonishment, approval, or a combination of both.

No doubt Forme will be shaking his head in *SUPERNATURAL LAW* for a long time to come. Lash maintains there is an inexhaustible supply of monsters in the Wolff & Byrd universe, or the Wolff & Byrd "neighborhood" as he likes to call it, perhaps drawn from that Monster Island of so long ago. "There'll never be enough ghost stories or werewolf stories," Lash says, his eyes alight with

enthusiasm. "I've done tons of variations. The way I look at it, there are so many versions of Frankenstein because there are so many ancestors and descendants of that character. And Dracula is the Elba of vampires. There are plenty of imitators, but only one Dracula. To me, the real Dracula has never been killed. The new ones are the imitations of meanderland. And in the afterlife, if there's unfinished business, you come back, so there's always a ghost. Plus, I do a lot stories about the supernaturally afflicted."

And what does Lash see ahead for *SUPERNATURAL LAW* and other comics? "I see a great future," he says. "Just the acceptance of comics now—we used to fantasize about that. When people complain that venues like San Diego Comic-Con are getting too crowded— isn't that what we always wanted? They have to come here, because this is where it's happening. The other night my wife [Comic-Con organizer Jackie Estrada] called me into the living room and on the TV a whole string of commercials was playing all promoting films based on comic books. So much entertainment is based just on comics. I never thought I'd see the day, but it's here."

"People find me," he adds. "And they tend to stay forever, which is very nice. More people are discovering *SUPERNATURAL LAW* all the time." And what advice would he give little Brian Lash, the eighteen-year-old lad in Brooklyn who had just watched his first monster movie? "I would say, 'Don't worry, kid, it's all gonna work out,'" he smiles. "I would say to anybody, as long as you are creative and have an enterprising mind, it's gonna break and break good for you."



THE ROCKY HORROR HISTORY SHOW



BY KIRK MCKEON

For many film going fans, a classic midnight movie is a rite of passage and a journey on their way to adult freedom. It's a common bond that dedicated audiences can share together while seeking in the black and white and Technicolor glory of little seen B-Movies and vintage Sci-Fi double features.

There is one midnight movie that for over forty years continues to captivate fans. For anyone who has ever done the "Time Warp", been "Over to the Frankenstein Place", or yelled "Say It!" at a movie screen, THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW continues to shine on as the ultimate in midnight movie novelty. As 2015 marks the cult film musical's 40th anniversary, it is only fitting that Famous Monsters explores its auspicious beginnings and eventual domination of the pop culture landscape. This is the history of Rocky Horror!

IT WAS GREAT WHEN IT ALL BEGAN

Composed and written by frustrated actor Richard O'Brien, Rocky Horror was his first attempt at a musical after being let go from a production of JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR. The film's original title was "It Came from Denton High", and O'Brien has stated in an interview that he

"was starting to think I wouldn't mind seeing a musical that appealed to me, an eternally adolescent 16-year-old B-Movie, rock-n-roll, and glam, so I thought I'd do a parody or homage to all those things."

For the average person, June 16, 1973 probably doesn't mean much. However, this is the date that "The Rocky Horror Show" made its stage debut at the small, avant-garde performance space above London's prestigious Royal Court Theater. The original production was directed by accomplished stage director Jim Sharman, who had previously worked with O'Brien on JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR. After hearing O'Brien's

initial ideas and songs, Sharman allegedly told the young composer, "They've asked me to do another play at the Royal Court, as long as they let me have three weeks' fun upstairs afterwards."

"The Rocky Horror Show" tells the story of the wholesome and newly engaged couple Brad and Janet. While on their way to visit their old science tutor Dr. Scott, the two are forced to seek refuge at a nearby mysterious mansion after their car suffers a flat tire during a torrential thunderstorm. What follows is a madcap rock musical with appropriate dashes of comedy, Sci-Fi, horror, and of course, sexual liberation.

Behind all the farce is Dr. Frank-N-Furter, played by the brilliant, incomparable, and iconic Tim Curry (IT, CLUE, LEGEND). Invariably he has become his most famous role, Curry manages to exude sensuality and musical bravado all while dressed in leather stockings and fishnetting. As his definitive song bluntly points out, "I'm just a sweet transvestite! From transvestic, TRANSYLVANIAAAAA!"

When we meet Frank-N-Furter, he is close to creating the perfect specimen of

manhood, the eponymous Rocky Horror. You don't have to look very far to see O'Brien's homages to the Frankenstein myth, all the while putting his own "unique" spin on the popular horror tale. In O'Brien's world, Frank-N-Furter isn't trying to cheat death or benefit humanity. He just wants a blond body builder for his own questionable devices. Assisted by the precious teams of Magenta (Patron Quince) and Columbia (Nell Campbell), Frank-N-Furter proceeds to break down Brad and Janet's pre-conceived, old fashioned, and rigid sexual views of the world.

On a British talk show from 1975, Curry went more into detail on his thoughts in accepting the role. "When I read it I just thought it was very witty and funny and the most economical script I had read for a very long time. I really thought it had a ticket on it. I was hesitant in that if it worked, it might be a difficult image to shake off. But really I've always thought that it wasn't worth doing unless you took a risk. So I just took the risk."

Curry's original performance of the part coupled with O'Brien's unique and edgy



soon naturally compelled it into a must-see show. In fact, it would eventually outgrow its home at the Royal Court Theater and play to larger and larger audiences across London, until Rocky's domination would make its way to a strange and frightening place called... Los Angeles!

DOCTOR X HAS BUILT A CREATURE

Fame is a funny thing, and something as hot as *Rocky Horror* had become wasn't going to go unnoticed across the pond. Legendary producer and songwriter Lou Adler had seen the original stage production in 1973 and was so taken by its potential that he soon after negotiated for its US production rights.

Adler opened the play in 1974 at his popular Sunset Strip music club The Roxy for what would eventually become a legendary nine-month stint. The only transfer from the original cast was, as you would expect, Tim Curry as Frank-N-Furter. As if having Tim Curry wasn't enough, this version also introduced the world to the vocal powerhouse Meat Loaf in the dual roles of Dr Scott and his doomed grasshopper nephew Eddie. As Adler later said in 2001, "The production stayed true to the original London arrangement

We opened it up somewhat, which Jim Sharman was able to do every time he took it to another venue, and eventually to film. I don't think that could have happened with another director."

In a way, "The Rocky Horror Show" was made for Los Angeles and the seedy underbelly of the famed Sunset Strip. Adler had been looking for a way to have more than just rock bands play at the venue, and "The Rocky Horror Show," not surprisingly, took LA audiences by storm. In the end, Rocky Horror, Lou Adler, and Los Angeles made perfect bedfellows, so to speak. So much so that Adler began cast-hunting an even larger venue for Richard O'Brien's little play that could. Enter the astute businessman, Adler explained, "Mostly everything that I get involved in I look at all the ancillary possibilities, and I was just realizing how much of a talent Tim was."

"The Rocky Horror Show" was about to get ready for its big close up.

FRANKENSTEIN IT'S TALK

1975's film adaptation, *THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW*, is unique in the sense that it is one of those rare movie musicals that actually opens up and

broadens the scope of the original source material. With outlandish sets, costuming, art direction, and justifiably over-the-top performances, the film is a mishmash of 1970s camp and a musical love letter to the Sci-Fi/horror genres that Richard O'Brien loved so much. Compared to the play, it is truly its own entity.

As O'Brien noted, the film is notable for having so many cast members from the original stage production reprise their roles. Dominating the screen as Frank-N-Furter, Magenta, Columbia, and Eddie are Tim Curry, Patricia Quinn, Neil Campbell, and Meat Loaf, respectively. However, when it came to Brad and Janet, 20th Century Fox insisted that *Amazons* be cast in the roles. After many auditions, it went to then-unknown actors Barry Bostwick (*SPIN CITY*) and Susan Sarandon (*THELMA AND LOUISE*, *DEAD MAN WALKING*) to immortalize the roles of the emotionally repressed hero and heroine forever.

But, if you were to pick one returning actor who is just as visually iconic for his role as Tim Curry, it would have to be Richard O'Brien himself. His role as the villainous, gassy-haired, and lurch-shouldered Riff-Raff has become just as representative of the film as Frank-N-Furter's fishnets and makeup. O'Brien's lifting and ethereal singing voice also served to lend such numbers "Over at the Frankenstein Place" and "Science Fiction Double Feature" a gravitas that fully usher you into his strange, strange world. While Iggy from *FRANKENSTEIN* was certainly the character's inspiration, O'Brien made the role uniquely his own.

Roundhing out this macabre cast was original director Jim Sharman. *THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW* was his first major studio movie, and not a second of screen time is wasted on opening up the musical from its small beginnings. In a 2008 interview, Sharman would go on to explain that it wasn't as simple as one would think. "The music for the film was re-arranged by Richard Hartley to suit the musical strengths of the cast. This resulted in a shift in interpretation between stage and film. There's a view that the film is just a stage show recorded, but this is far from true. Sometimes time and budget restrictions meant we could only cover the action, but there's more cinematic thinking behind it than is credited."

What the movie lacks sometimes in



With crazy costumes and catchy songs, *ROCKY HORROR* has surpassed its contemporaries to become one of musical cinema's legends.

and signature song of the musical.

Amid its horrific lanscapes, the film's mentors and main message can be found in the finale's "Don't Dream It, Be It". Tim Curry's ode to being true to yourself has moved many things to many people and still remains one of the most moving moments of the musical. Whatever sexuality or ideology you identify with, forty years on it still has the ability to inspire people to be the best person they can be.

GIVE YOURSELF OVER.

Upon its initial release in August of 1975, *THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW* fared miserably at the box office and ultimately came and went without much fanfare. While all involved were clearly disappointed, *ROCKY HORROR* was only getting up for its second act. Seeing that Rocky could have a second life at the movies, Fox executive Tim Deegan convinced the distributor for the Waverly Theater in New York City's Greenwich Village to book it as a Saturday night midnight movie.

Needless to say, the gamble paid off, and the movie became the must-see midnight event of New York City. Legions of fans flocked to it week after week to be part of the film... in more ways than one. Besides

feverishly shouting responses to lines in the movie, dedicated fans arrived in costume as Frank-N-Furter, Riff-Raff, Magenta, and Columbia to lovingly lip sync to scenes as they played on the screen above them. In a way, Rocky Horror was the original cosplay event! The "party" eventually spread throughout the world, and to this day the midnight screenings show no signs of stopping. In fact, one of the most lively and decadent screenings can still be found at Los Angeles's Nuart Theater.

In the end, what started out as an offbeat idea in the eccentric mind of Richard O'Brien has turned into something that is much more. Millions of people continue to identify with this quirky rock opera. So as *THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW* turns forty this year, it's only appropriate that we give it a tip of our gold sequined top hat, take a "jump to the right", and hope that the next forty years will be just as seductive as the first.

In the immortal words of Frank-N-Furter "I see you shiver with anticipation..."

Oh, you know the rest.

Neil McVally is an entertainment journalist living in Los Angeles. To read more of his work please visit www.neilmcvallywriter.com

FAST LANE

ERIC RED RETURNS TO HIS HITCHER ROOTS
WITH HORROR ON THE OPEN ROAD IN

WHITE KNUCKLE

by Ed Brin

Eric Red first terrified audiences when he created one of the most terrifying *Road Horror* movies of all time, *THE HITCHER*. Since then he's been turning out an entire library of films and books filled with all manner of scares. But his latest, *WHITE KNUCKLE*, brings us back to the open road and the heart-stopping terror awaiting just around the bend.

Famous Masters. With *GUNS OF SANTA SANGRE*, you gave us outlaw gunfighters battling werewolves. With *IT WAITS BELOW*, we get a Lovecraftian nightmare made real. But with *WHITE KNUCKLE*, it feels like there's a greater sense of anticipation, because from the

moment you see that amazing cover by John Gallagher with the big rig, the first thought is that you're returning to a world similar to one of your most beloved creatures, *THE HITCHER*. Did you have any hesitation in jumping back into the open road and manic areas, or was it exciting to see what other

nightmares awaited you on the highway?" Eric Red, *With WHITE KNUCKLE*, I wanted to write a book that did for highways what *JAWS* did for the ocean. *Road horror* was an arena I always wanted to explore as a novel, having done it in films many times. The notion involves a reverse claustrophobia

where even though you're surrounded by vast highway and open spaces, you can't get away, there's no escape. The spare roadside iconography focuses the suspense with a less-is-more economy of elements distilling the confrontation down to its basic moving parts and heightening the tension. There's also a sense of speed—on the road, you're driving forward fast, injecting suspense pace and momentum into the narrative. This novel gave me the opportunity to do a bigger, scarier, mad horror story than I'd done before, with a bad guy so terrifying he makes *The Hitcher* look soft.

FML So where did the idea for *WHITE KNUCKLE* come from? What ideas or themes were you looking to explore and what classic influences were you drawing from?

ER The idea for the book came when my wife and I drove across America a few years ago and saw all those countless tractor-trailers driving these thousands of miles of interstate. If one of those big rigs was a serial killer truck driver, I wondered, how would you know? How would law enforcement track him down? There's literally millions of trucks on the U.S. highways, and it would be like finding a needle in haystack. That sounded like a solid mystery idea fraught with thriller possibilities. The notion of a serial killer tractor-trailer truck driver is reliable because we all know what it feels like to drive on the highway, and that shiver of fear we feel when a tractor-trailer eighteen-wheeler hurtles by a little too close. It tips into a universal fear.

The influences were books in the serial killer procedural thriller genre by Thomas Hines and James Patterson. *WHITE KNUCKLE* is in the same wheelhouse as *RED DRAGON* and *KISS THE GIRLS*.

FML One of the things that was really fascinating was that your protagonist is a resourceful female FBI agent who's hunting the serial killer down. It could have been easy to make the protagonist a man and simply over-emphasize stereotypical physical attributes, but you took it in another direction with Agent Sharon Ormsby, who's not some superhuman evi-

lence soldier. How was it creating her? Did it feel like you got to be more creative because simply punching her way out of every conflict wasn't an option, like she was more three-dimensional?

ER The inspiration for the character is a good friend of mine who is an FBI Special Agent, and a lot of her personal qualities are channeled with Sharon in the book. As a character, Sharon's tough and determined, but in a believable way, with plenty of doubts and vulnerabilities that make her human and identifiable. The reader should feel what it's like to be a real FBI Special Agent at points in the book.

FML If there's one thing that really stuck out at me throughout this book, it's the pacing. It's relentless. It really is like a white knuckle ride. It goes full speed, hits the brakes hard and comes to a dead stop, making the reader think they get to catch their breath... and then WHAM! it's on you again. As a writer, were you conscious of the pace throughout the writing process, because it feels more like a cinematic pacing at times as opposed to a literary pacing, which really plays in favor of this story? It feels like a nice hybrid of your author and screenwriter personas.

ER I wanted to write a good, page-turning thriller of the kind I've always loved to read. The you-can't-put-it-down factor, that's the fun of this kind of book. This novel was all about the pace.

FML I appreciate you taking the time because right now you're on the set of your latest film. I've also heard rumblings about a potential sequel to *SANTA SANGRE*. Share with me, if you would, a little about the film and some of your upcoming Samhain books.

ER I'm presently directing a SyFy Channel TV movie called *NIGHT OF THE WILD*



that's *THE BIRDS* with dogs. It's a very exciting old school horror thriller, with lots of exciting dog attack sequences and characters you pull for. It stars Kelly Rutherford, Rob Moran and Tisha May, who have been wonderful to work with. This is the first time I've directed somebody else's screenplay. It am this fall.

The sequel to *THE GUNS OF SANTA SANGRE* I'm writing for Samhain now, Titled *THE WOLVES OF EL DIABLO*, it continues the adventures of the three gunsmen Tucker, Fox, and Boede fighting werewolves in old Mexico. The werewolf leader Mosca in the first novel has a sister, boss of another faction of lycanthropes, who wants pay-back for the cowboys killing her brother. A lot of the book is set on a light-blasting steam train with the gunlight-battling fify footers who have been turned into wolfmen. It's wild. The sequel has more wolfmen, more gore, much more werewolf western action. It takes it to the next level.

WHITE KNUCKLE is available through all major book resellers. Catch up with Eric Red at www.ericred.com.

STEVE NILES

NAT JONES

BROKEN MOON



Horror comics are a specialty—one beholden to a select few. And at *Famous Monsters*, we knew just where to turn to get our first horror series up and running: Steve Niles (30 DAYS OF NIGHT, CRIMINAL MACABRE), who has been tingling the spines of comic fans for decades of darkened pages. Niles introduced us to the amazing Nat Jones (SPAWN, '68), a monster veteran whose scraggly pencils and vivid landscapes make for extraordinary accompaniment. The story? BROKEN MOON, a tale of post-apocalyptic battles between vampires, werewolves, and what little is left of humanity. Impending destruction and impeccable pacing drive the pages within, where the human Avery obtains world-changing intel from the vampire city stronghold and races back to join her tribe—who must share the dead land with packs of werewolves. What follows are the first seven pages of BROKEN MOON #1.

WRITER:
STEVE NILES

ART & COLOR:
NAT JONES

STORY BY:
PHILIP KIM

LETTERER:
MARSHALL DILLON

COVER ARTISTS:
NAT JONES (A)
SANJULIAN (INCENTIVE COVER)

EDITOR:
HOLLY INTERLANDI

PRODUCTION DESIGNER:
DOMINIE LEE





FOR CENTURIES, MONSTERS
LIVED ON THE EDGE, NEARLY
OF THE SHADOWS, OUT OF
OF BEING HUNTED BY HUMANS.



BUT NOW, THE MONSTERS ARE
BEING STRETCHED TO THEIR LIMIT.



THE JACOB PROJECT TOOK
A 540-208, CURRENT A NEW
ERA IN SPACIAL EXPLORATION.
NUMBER 1, IT WAS SPUN OFF
FIRST BY THE UNITED STATES,
THEN FOLLOWED SOONLY BY
CHINA, RUSSIA, AND INDIA.

THE WICKED HAS SEXTONED
OUT AND TERRIFIED BUT
PEACE DID NOT LAST LONG



TOOKS BRIGHT BOW
TOOK THE FIRST RIBBON



ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND
TROOPS DIED



THE WICKED WERE
HARVESTED AGAIN



THE EFFECT ON
THE EARTH WAS
CATASTROPHIC

THE TIDE ROSE, WALKING
STORM SPREAD ACROSS THE
CONTINENTS, AND 2 BILLION
INHALIC GLASS, CRAPPED
UNDER THE SEA FLOOR
WERE RELEASED INTO THE
ATMOSPHERE. THIS WAS A
MOVEMENT OF SEAS
OF CIVILIZATION LIKE TOYS
ON A TABLE.

NUCLEAR BEAMS
ALL BUT EXTINCT

IT WAS THE TIME
OF THE MONSTER



AND NOW HUMAN
WOULD BE THE
ONE TO COME IN
SHAPES



THIRTY YEARS LATER

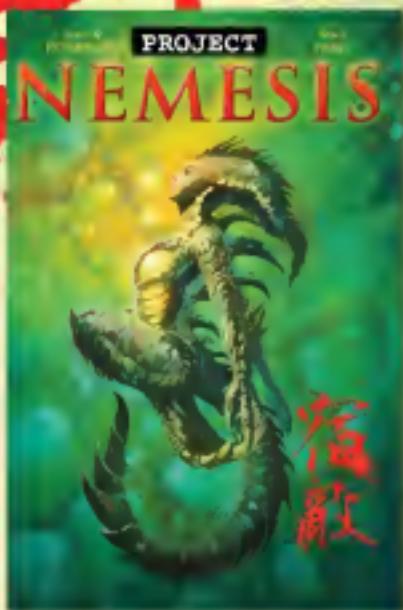
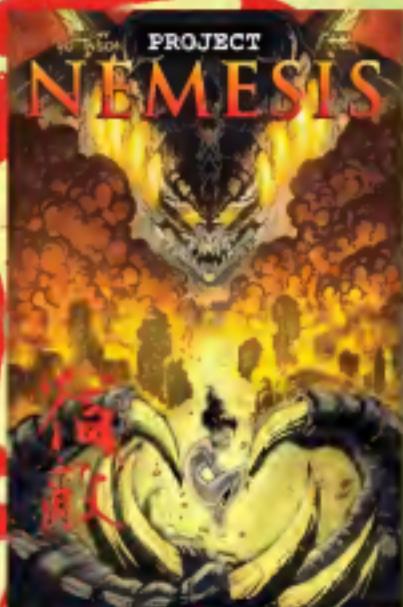
NO LONGER ABLE TO FEED ON HUMANS OR BLOOD, THE VAMPIRES HAD TURNED TO CAPTURING ANIMALS AND ALIMENTING THEM WITH HUMANS THEY COULD FIND.

WALKING WITHIN THE LINES OF THE VAMPIRES, THEY HAD TO GET THEIR OWN SOCIETY OUT OF THE WORLD OF VAMPIRISM.









WRITER:

JEREMY ROBINSON

ART:

MATT FRANK

COLOR:

Diego Rodriguez

Anthony Diecidue (Cover A)

LETTERER:

Marshall Dillon

COVER ARTISTS:

Matt Frank (Cover A)

Bob Eggleton (Cover B)

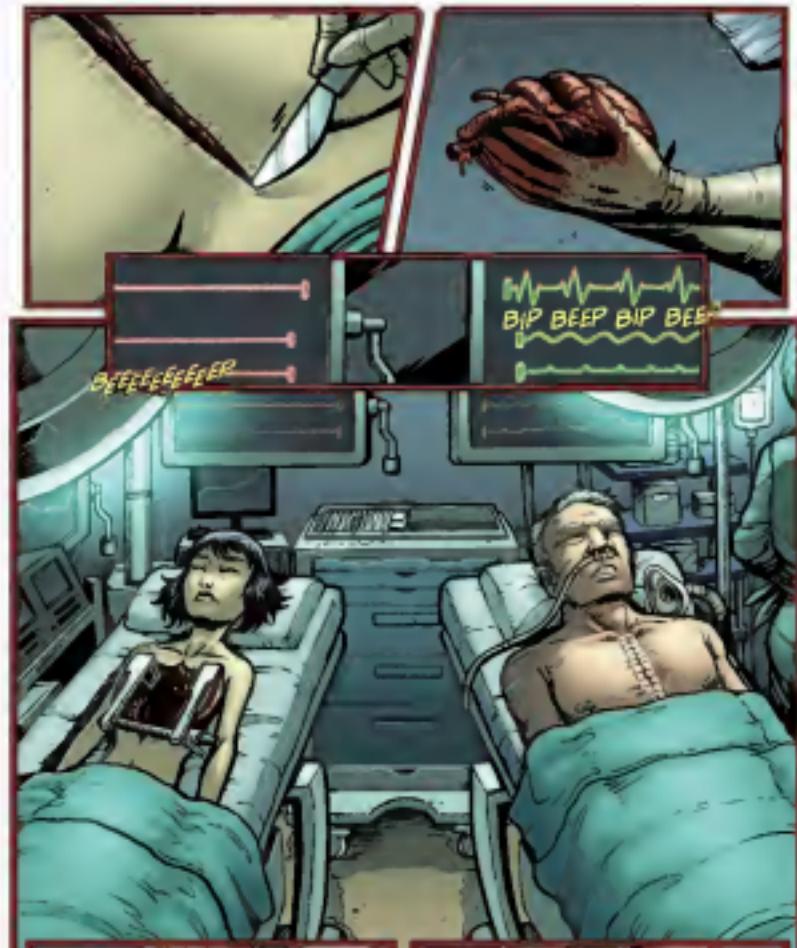
EDITOR:

Holly Interlandi

PRODUCTION DESIGNER:

Dominic Lee

Best-selling author Jeremy Robinson has taken it upon himself to solve a very specific problem: the lack of original, quality kaiju stories being created today. While Godzilla and friends still rule the roost and become more popular with age, the lack of new giant monsters is disconcerting. Occasionally we get our CLOVERFIELD or PACIFIC RIM. But kaiju are woefully absent from the literary world. Robinson seeks to correct that with his NEMESIS series. The story centers around a government medical experiment that creates a giant monster from an unlikely source. But Nemesis is something more than a giant monster bent on destruction; she has a soul, one that has a mission. And Jon Hudson, head of the oft-denied Homeland Security branch that investigates paranormal occurrences like Bigfoot sightings, might be the only one who can unravel Nemesis' intentions and avert disaster on a cataclysmic scale. The six-part comic will cover the first book in the series. It will hit stores in October and will be available for pre-order in the August issue of PREVIEWS.









FANGTASTIC FASHION

BUILD YOUR OWN MONSTER APPAREL!
SEE IT ALL AT CAPTAINCO.COM!

STEP 1



Men's T-shirt



Slim-fit hoodie



Women's T-shirt



Women's Thermal Hoodie

STARTING
AT
\$19.99!

CHOOSE YOUR GARMENT (5 STYLES TO CHOOSE FROM!)

STEP 2



Godzilla vs. Cthulhu



Frankenstein Sports Logo



Monster Kids Flag



Rick Baker's Bride

CHOOSE YOUR DESIGN (OVER 50 TO CHOOSE FROM!)

STEP 3



COMPLETE YOUR ORDER!

Fill out the order form, or order online at CAPTAINCO.COM

SO MANY TO CHOOSE FROM!



GUILLERMO



CLASH OF THE KAIJU



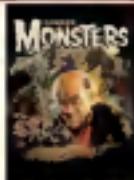
GODZILLA 1954



GODZILLA 2014



SUPERNATURAL



RAY HARRYHAUSEN



EL SANTO



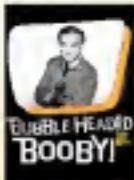
LOST IN SPACE COVER



LOST IN SPACE ROBOT



LOST IN SPACE LOGO



BUBBLE-HEADED BOOBY!



BUCK ROGERS MOVIE



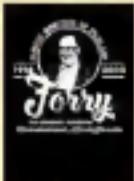
FM METAL LADY LOGO



FM CURRENT LOGO



FM THRASH LOGO



JERRY SUPERHERO



SHREDDING UP JERRY



SCIENCE FICTION



HORRORWOOD, KA



JOHN CARTER VICTORIOUS



JOHN CARTER VOL. 1



FAMOUS MONSTERS LOGO



LA NOVIA



MONSTERS IN ACTION



CHINATOWN TRACKER



SLASHER CLASH



KING KONG



FREAKSHOW CLOWN



GROOVY



HAIL, CTHULHU

Fill out the order form, or order online at CAPTAINCO.COM

facebook.com/FMOFL

PETRIFYING POSTERS & GICLEES



BRIDE
by Rick Baker



WINGOLLA VS. CYBORG
by Bob Eggleton



MONSERRATE
by Bob Eggleton



CHAMERUS
by Bob Eggleton



WILD MAX
by Terry Wallinger



LOST IN SPACE
by Terry Wallinger



BEAUTY & THE BEAST
by Frank Frazetta



BORN VON HAMMETS
by Terry Wallinger



JOHN CARTER
by Siquelan



COLONIAL WARS
by Terry Wallinger



STRANGER WITHIN
by Siquelan



GODZILLA 1954
by Bob Eggleton



INSENTRIS
by Bob Eggleton



ROLLANTE
by Bob Eggleton



GODZILLA 2014
by Bob Eggleton



ISLAND OF THE BALAM
by Bob Eggleton



MECHAGODZILLA
by Bob Eggleton



COLONIAL WARS
by Bob Eggleton



TRANSFORMERS
by Fred Everett



STAR WARS
by Bob Eggleton



DRIVE-IN
by Siquelan



SHAMAN FESTIVAL
by Terry Wallinger



RICHARD MATTHEWS
by Simon Thorne



5054
by Jason Edmiston



BAN HAMMHAUSER
by Terry Wallinger



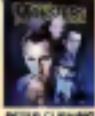
DOCTOR WHO
by Simon Thorne



BANSU VS. WOLF
by Terry Wallinger



SANTA'S SHADOWS
by Jason Edmiston



PETRI CLUMPS
by Dave Elstey



ADEWAM'S FAMILY
by Paul Gerner



KING KONG
by Jason Edmiston



CTHULHU
by Bob Eggleton



WICKED WITCH
by Jason Thorne



BRY BRADSBURY
by Jason Thorne



THE HORRIT
by Siquelan



DRACULA
by Bob Eggleton



CHARLY VON HORN
by Dave Elstey



VINCENT PRICE
by Jason Edmiston



VOLDEMORT
by Jason Edmiston



Nosferatu
by Richard Corben

Poster & Giclee Prints (Enter Type & Qty. on Ind.)

Type Description

P 18x24in Premium Gloss Posters (\$15.00)
GP 18x24in. Giclee Canvas Print (\$49.99)

Giclee Canvas Stretched on Wood Frame:

GCM 14x18x1in (\$20.99)
GLG 18x24x1in (\$119.99)

Please Note: Famous Monsters of Filmland Logo may vary between posters and Giclees

LIMITED EDITION! Signed and Numbered

WOLFMAN by Rick Baker (Jumboed to 100)
Stretched Canvas 18x24x1in (\$299.99)

ALSO AVAILABLE: Unsigned Edition

Stretched Canvas 14x18x1in (\$179.99)



WOLFMAN
by Rick Baker
"Signed only"

Fill out the order form, or order online at CAPTAINICO.COM

IT LIVES! THE WORLD'S FIRST MONSTER FAN MAGAZINE!

FM #201A \$9.95

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (beginning with FM #201) \$99.95



THE KREATURE



FM #201B
ROCK MONSTER EXCLUSIVE!



FM #201C
MONSTER



FM #201D
MONSTER



FM #201E
MONSTER



FM #201F
MONSTER



FM #201G
MONSTER



FM #201H
MONSTER



FM #201I
MONSTER



FM #201J
MONSTER



FM #201K
GARO EXCLUSIVE!



FM #201L
MONSTER



FM #201M
MONSTER



FM #201N
MONSTER



FM #201O
MONSTER



FM #201P
MONSTER



FM #201Q
MONSTER



FM #201R
MONSTER



FM #201S
MONSTER



FM #201T
MONSTER



FM #201U
MONSTER



FM #201V
MONSTER



FM #201W
MONSTER



FM #201X
MONSTER



FM #201Y
MONSTER



FM #201Z
MONSTER



FM #201A
MONSTER



FM #201B
MONSTER



FM #201C
MONSTER



FM #201D
MONSTER



FM #201E
MONSTER



FM #201F
MONSTER



FM #201G
MONSTER



FM #201H
MONSTER



FM #201I
MONSTER



FM #201J
MONSTER



FM #201K
MONSTER



FM #201L
MONSTER



FM #201M
MONSTER



FM #201N
MONSTER

CAPTAIN COMPANY P.O. BOX 9006 SANTA ROSA, CA 95405

ITEM CODE/DESCRIPTION

Type 8x12, G.T. PRICE

FM#201

Name _____

Subtotal _____

Address _____

Discount _____

City _____

S & H _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

TOTAL _____

Fill out the order form, or order online at CAPTAINCO.COM

Please include \$6.95 for domestic shipping and handling plus \$1.00 for each additional item in the same order. Add an additional \$10.00 for each *Geisha*. We accept checks (14 day wait and money orders) **DO NOT SEND CASH**. Credit card orders are only accepted through www.captainco.com, not for mail orders.

facebook.com/FM0FL

FAMOUS LAST WORDS



"I'm not a moron, you know. I... Was that my grandparents?"

—Chet Donnelly (Bill Paxton),
WEIRD SCIENCE

NEXT ISSUE:

ASH IS BACK! With STARZ preparing to launch their new EVIL DEAD TV show featuring Bruce Campbell and Lucy Lawless, it's time to dig in and find out who is the grooviest of them all. Plus we'll be celebrating anniversaries of two of the most legendary 80s films, FLASH GORDON and BACK TO THE FUTURE. With October comes all manner of scary film, but none more anticipated than Guillermo del Toro's gothic horror masterpiece, CRIMSON PEAK. Plus a look at a new book detailing the works of artist Ralph McQuarrie, and much more!

REGGIE OLIVER, winner of the 2012 Children of the Night Award for Supernatural Fiction, brings together the finest stories from six collections and some which have not been published before, all told in Oliver's famously elegant and evocative style.

A sophisticated and terrifying ride ... Nightmarish, theatrical, often strangely profound, this excellent collection will inspire and haunt your mind.

The SEA of BLOOD



REGGIE OLIVER

... powerful stories ... beyond genre ... you'll want to read them all."

—MICHAEL DIERA, Pulitzer Prize-winning book critic

... possibly our finest modern writer of spectral tales."

—RAMSEY CAMPBELL

... the best living exponent of the spooky yarn ..."

—BARRY HUMPHRIES

"Oliver's ability to create a sense of time and place in every one of these stories is exemplary.... As a work of spiritual terror it has few peers ..."

—JIM ROCKHILL, *All Hallows*

COMING IN 2015: Available in deluxe lettered and signed #1 numbered hardcover editions.

DARKrenaissance.com

CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF

LOST IN Space



BUBBLE HEADED
BOOBY!

LOST
IN
SPACE

Men's & Women's
SHIRTS & HOODIES

MAGAZINE &
POSTER



AVAILABLE AT CAPTAINCO.COM

Amelia Allen © 1998 & Taffic, LOST IN SPACE © Space Predictions, Inc.

COASTERS



FAMOUS
MONSTERS
PRESENTS

NEW HORROR EPIC FROM

American Gothic Press

COMING SEPT 2015



WRITTEN BY: STEVE NILES
ART BY: NAT JONES
VARIANT INCENTIVE COVER BY:
SANJULIAN

STAY UP TO DATE! FOLLOW US ON:

/AGPMONSTERS



@AGPMONSTERS

WWW.AMERICANGOthicPRESS.COM

@AGPMONSTERS

AVAILABLE FOR PRE-ORDER AT YOUR LOCAL COMIC SHOP
TO FIND YOUR NEAREST SHOP CALL 888-266-4226